

The Challenge of Achieving Universal Primary Education in Ethiopia

A study of out-of-school children in
Southern Nation, Nationalities and
People's Region

Minyahel Muluneh Yimer



Department of Educational Research
Faculty of Educational Sciences
University of Oslo

May 2012

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Abstract

Achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) is one of the current Education for All (EFA) goals that virtually every country, particularly developing countries, has prioritized in their national strategy of eradicating poverty. In 2008, about 67 million children remain out-of-school globally, and Ethiopia is among the top five (UNESCO, 2011). It is projected that according to the current trend there will be more than 72 million out-of-school children by 2015 (Ibid). This study examines how the current course of action to achieve the goal continues to be challenged by analyzing the case of out-of-school children from two social groups in the Gofa Zuria woreda, Southern Nation, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR), Ethiopia.

Using the theory of social exclusion and the rights-based approach to education, the study selected two social groups: dominant (farmers) and occupational minorities. It analyzed how differences in social, economic as well as political circumstances between the groups continue to reinforce the exclusion of children from education. The study employed a comparative two-case study design using qualitative methods. Ten families from each group who have out-of-school children were included in the study. Furthermore, educational experts at federal, regional and woreda levels as well as Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) were included. Focus group discussion, semi-structured interview as well as personal observation were used for data collection. Moreover, policy documents were analyzed.

The findings in this study indicate that the two social groups have group-specific factors which explain why their children are excluded from education. The children from the minority group experience two forms of disadvantages: economic and cultural ones that prevent the full participation of the group in the wider society. Parents from the dominant group, on the other hand, managed to send some of their children to school while keeping others at home. This group appears to be excluded due to supply side factors, such as school fees. The study argues that a more flexible approach to addressing the changing and varied problems of social groups is needed to address the goal of UPE.

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List of Acronyms

CSA	Central Statistics Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ERP	Education for Rural People
ESDP	Education Sector Development Plan
ETP	Education and Training Policy
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
KETB	Kebele Education and Training Board
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PTAs	Parent-Teacher Associations
SNNPR	Southern Nation, Nationalities and People Regional State
UN	United Nations
UNDHR	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEB	Woreda Education Bureau

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Education for All and Universal Primary Education

In 1990, the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) which was held in Jomtien, Thailand, agreed upon six education goals. In 2000, the goals were endorsed again by governments and bilateral and multinational donors. The second of the goals is ‘Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality’ (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2000). This goal is also emphasized in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Since then, achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) has become one of the priority areas of national development agendas in most developing countries. Education is considered to be a precondition to achieving an array of other goals ranging from individual self-realization, peace and stability to economic goals for social development (Ibid; Mundy, 2007; Sen, 1999; Chabbott, 2003). Strategies to achieve the goal, and measuring and monitoring of progress have been put in place around the world.

Most African countries have registered progress towards the realization of UPE. Amongst others, through abolishing school fees, a number of African countries have increased enrolment rates in primary education (World Bank, 2009). But the progress is not even. So far, Sub-Saharan African countries are lagging behind other regions of the world (Semali, 2007; UNESCO, 2011; Lewin, 2007). The EFA Global Monitoring Report shows that this region comprises almost half of the world’s out-of-school children (UNESCO, 2011). Ethiopia, a Sub-Saharan African nation, is among the top five countries with the largest number of out-of-school children. Nevertheless, the country

was recently praised for its impressive progress in enrolment having aligned its development strategies with the current emphasis on UPE (UNESCO, 2011; Ministry of Finance and Economic Development [MoFED], 2010). The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at primary level has risen from 32 per cent in 1990/91 to 96.4 per cent in 2010/11 (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2002, 2011).

The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of the country, formulated in 1994, aims to ensure that all school-aged children, particularly those in rural and underserved areas and specifically girls, get access to quality primary education by the year 2015 (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia [FDRE], 1994). Hence, the government has formulated educational policies and strategies which encourage rural communities to send their children to school. The government abolished school fees in primary education (grade 1-10) in 1994. It also introduced Education Sector Development Plans (ESDPs), a series of plans to successively meet the EFA goals by the given time frame. The policy acknowledges that one of the chronic problems of the education system in the country is inequality in access to education (MoE, 2002). One of the primary aims of introducing free primary education is to bring those school-aged children to school who would otherwise be out of school for mere lack of money. Massive construction of schools has taken place in rural areas, as part of a campaign to provide access to the rural population that accounts for 85 per cent of the total population. There has been an increase in the number of primary schools from 16,000 in 2004/05 to more than 25,000 in 2008/09. More than 80 per cent of the schools are in rural areas. Moreover, the government has progressively increased the share of education in the national budget from 19.8 per cent in 2004/05 to close to 22.8 per cent in 2009/10 (MoE, 2009).

The government underlines the importance of partnerships at both local and national level to realize UPE. The Dakar Framework for Action also indicated that partnership is one of the ways to achieve the EFA goals (UNESCO, 2000). The education sector clearly indicates that for its mission of providing quality education for all to be met, active participation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the private sector is required (MoE, 2002, 2006) because of limited government ability to expand educational

opportunities to all school-aged children. The incumbent government, which took power in 1991, introduced a decentralized education system in which communities have been given the responsibility of running primary schools in their localities. It states that community contributions and involvement in schooling are important means of financing education through mobilization of their own resources to construct additional classrooms and schools (MoE, 2002).

Despite the current increase in enrolment at the primary level, the education system is facing a number of challenges. Even the enrolment rates show wide disparity among regions. For example, in 2010/11, the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) at primary (1-8) level in Gambela region was 97.1 per cent whereas in Afar region it was 31.9 per cent, compared to the national NER of 89 per cent. The successive ESDPs, from ESDP I to IV, attribute the problem of regional disparity to the lack of capacity at regional and woreda levels to execute education policies, initiatives and overcome challenges in their constituencies (MoE, 2005, 2006, 2010b). As stated, ‘inadequate planning and management capacity at the lower levels of the organizational structures (e.g. woredas) is a critical problem in realizing EFA goals’ (MoE, 2006:30). It is also indicated that this lack of capacity led to low budget utilization in some regions (MoE, 2010b). The lack of capacity at local level means that UPE appears to be at risk, because of the fact that it is the woredas’ responsibility to realize it.

As previously mentioned, Ethiopia is among the top five countries in terms of the number of out-of-school children. This thesis focuses on the challenges of realizing UPE, given the policies and frameworks introduced so far in the country, by examining out-of-school children from two social groups, the dominant group and occupational minorities, in one locality in southern Ethiopia.

1.2 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What causes children from the two social groups to be out-of-school at a time when UPE is a flagship?
2. To what extent is the government concerned with the issue of out-of-school children from the two groups?
3. To what extent do NGOs and civil society organizations take part in addressing the issue of out-of-school children in the area investigated?

1.3 Purpose and Justification

The central purpose of the study, as described above, is to comparatively analyze why children from two different social groups have not been to school in a specific local area in southern Ethiopia given the current race towards achieving UPE. Specifically, the study aims to:

- ✓ Explore the factors which account for children's lack of access to education, given their different social backgrounds.
- ✓ Analyze the role of the government in dealing with the issue of out-of-school children in the country in general, and with regard to the two groups in particular.
- ✓ Analyze how the policy documents and strategies address the issue of out-of-school children.
- ✓ Investigate the role of NGOs and other stakeholders in dealing with the issue of out-of-school children.

1.4 Scope of the study

The study is confined to one particular area of southern Ethiopia, Gofa Zuria woreda. According to the federal system of the country, there are tiers of government from regions, zones, woredas, to kebeles, which are the lowest level of administration. While there are minorities in almost all parts of the country, this study is restricted to the Gofa Zuria woreda where both the dominant population and minorities live.

1.5 Significance of the study

Since UPE has to be achieved within the next three years, by 2015, it is important to analyze the challenges for reaching the goal. It is particularly important to understand the situation of out-of-school children who have not been to school despite the policies and strategies that have been formulated.

The selected groups are: occupational minorities (craftsmen by occupation) and the dominant group (farmers). Occupational minorities are widely spread in Ethiopia, but are particularly concentrated in southern Ethiopia. They are looked down on by farmers, who treat them as if they are ‘not real people’ (Freeman and Pankhurst, 2003:1; Silverman, 1999). There are very few studies on this particular group. Most of the studies are from anthropological and sociological perspectives¹ and have not focused on their participation in education. Hence, this study brings new insights on the status of the group in the education system as compared with the dominant group.

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis has seven chapters. Following the introduction in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 introduces the important educational policies and strategies of Ethiopia on UPE since

¹ See: Levine (1974), Freeman and Pankhurst (2003), Dea (2007, 2000), Haaland et al. (2004), Gebreselassie (2003), Haaland (2004), Lewis (1962), Pausewang and Zewde (2002).

1990, in the context of the selected two social groups. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework and reviews relevant literature on the determinants of education. Chapter 4 presents the research methodology and the process of data collection. Chapter 5 analyses the data collected in the field on out-of-school children from the two groups in light of the formulated research questions. Chapter 6 discusses the predominant exclusionary factors affecting children's education in the two groups and draws conclusions in the light of the theoretical framework and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and 3.

Chapter 2: The Context for UPE in Ethiopia Since 1990

This chapter outlines the general situation of UPE in Ethiopia with particular attention to the issue of out-of-school children from the minority and dominant groups. It also introduces the important policies and strategies for UPE in light of the existing government structures of the education system.

Ethiopia is one of the oldest nations in the world and the oldest independent country in Africa. Situated in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria. The population was estimated at about 73 million² in 2007, with a projected annual growth rate of 2.6 per cent. About 85 per cent of the population currently lives in the rural areas. According to projections undertaken by the Central Statistics Authority (CSA), the total population is estimated to reach 81.3 million in 2009/10, with 16.5 million being children of primary school age (CSA, 2012).

There are more than 80 ethnic groups who vary in terms of population size, ranging from 23 million to fewer than one hundred (Ibid). With 85 per cent of the population dependent on rain-fed subsistence agriculture that accounts for 42.1 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the majority of Ethiopians are vulnerable to climatic shifts. The country is one of the poorest in the world with a per capita income not exceeding 100 USD, and approximately 44 per cent of the population is living below the poverty line. It is estimated that about 19 million will be living in absolute poverty in 2015 (MoFED, 2008).

² There is no accurate figure of the population. CIA factbook estimates the number at 90 million in 2012 (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/et.html>). Other sources put the number much higher than 73 million in 2007.

2.1 Minority and Dominant Groups

In Ethiopia, the term ‘minority’ is used to refer to two kinds of ethnic groups: endogenous or exogenous groups. Endogenous minorities are those ethnic groups that have traditionally lived in the territory of a region. Exogenous minorities are ethnic groups that have migrated to the region in the recent past and are endogenous in another region (Van der Beken, 2007). According to the current federal system, introduced in 1991, these minorities rarely have political representation in decision making in their respective constituencies, for they are perceived as either insignificant or outsiders.

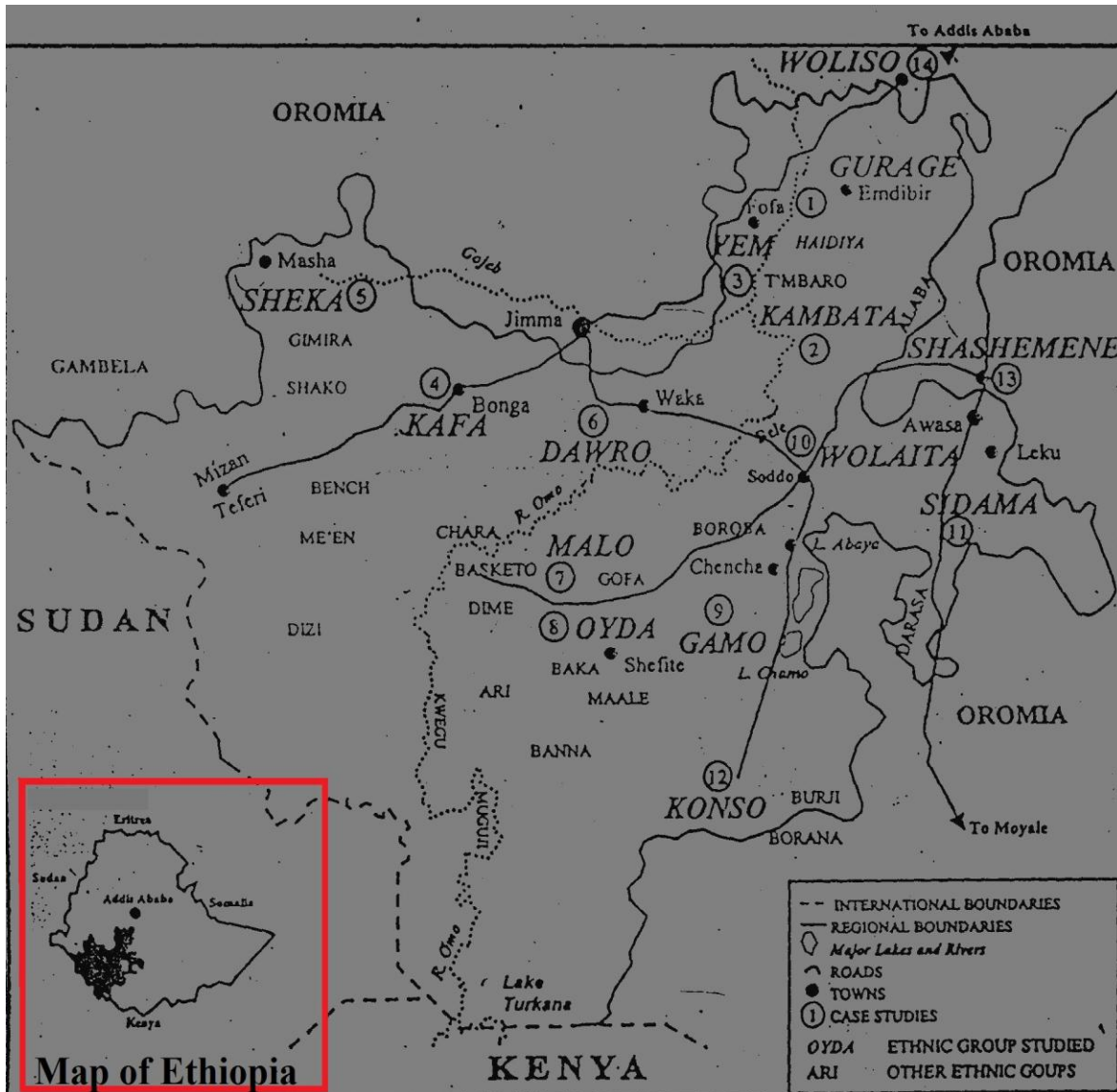
Occupational Minorities

The minorities in this study are the occupational minorities. According to Dea (2007), they are hardly considered as a distinct ethnic group in the territory they share with the rest of the population. This is due to the federal system which considers language as the main tool for recognizing a particular ethnic group as distinct (Pausewang and Zewde, 2002; Gebreselassie, 2003; Haile, 1996). The occupational minorities, on the other hand, speak the same language as the population with whom they live (Freeman and Pankhurst, 2003; Pausewang and Zewde, 2003; Haaland, Haaland and Dea, 2004).

Traditionally, these minorities are called ‘hunters’ or ‘occupational castes’, and they live in all regions across the country. Some of them are the *Watta* among the Oromo, the *Weyto* among the Amhara, the *Fuga* or *Mana* among the Gurage, the *Manjo* among the Kaffa, the *Kwegu* among the Mursi/Bodi, the *Hadicho* among the Sidama, and the *Mijan* and *Yibir* among the Somali (Freeman and Pankrust, 2003).³ The majority of the minorities are confined to southern Ethiopia particularly in the central and western parts as depicted in Map 2.1. Clapham (1975:73) termed the region, a region of ‘minorities’.

³ Minorities are in italics while dominant groups are underlined. The list is not exhaustive. There are different minorities with a single name, for example *fuga* or *mana* would include many other minority groups classified by their occupations such as smith, potter, smelter, etc. (Haaland et al., 2004:80). For more, see Gebreselassie (2003:35), Freeman and Pankhurst (2003), Haaland (2004), Lewis (1962), Pausewang and Zewde (2002:24).

Map 2.1: Minority Groups Located in South-Western Ethiopia



Source: Freeman and Pankhurst (2003), p: xxxv.

Note: The names in capital letters refer to dominant societies to which the minorities are confined.

As argued by many scholars, it is predominantly the occupational specification which distinguishes occupational minorities from the rest of the population (Pankhurst, 1999; Dea, 1997; Gebreselassie, 2003; Freeman and Pankhurst, 2003). Their occupation as hunters, tanners, pottery producers, smiths, weavers and wood workers shaped their

culture and way of life as well as their interaction with the dominant groups. Their occupations are different from that of the rest of the population who largely depends on traditional farming. Scholars have debated widely how the groups developed their unique occupations. So far, no single explanation has been given as to whether the marginalized occupational groups belong to the original inhabitants, or are migrants or groups from within the population that specialized in a non-farming occupation (Pankhurst, 1999).

Lewis (1962) attributes the phenomenon to the beliefs held among Ethiopians that any group that deviates culturally or physically from the rest of the population is at the fate of being segregated and not welcomed (Ibid:504). Nonetheless, their occupations have been vital for the daily living of the whole society. As Freeman and Pankhurst (2003:1) state 'these people play an important role in the society among whom they live, and yet they have such a low status that many of them are considered to be 'not real people' by the majority around them.' Their products are still very crucial for the larger community, since pottery is essential for processing food and carrying water; leather products are used for sleeping mats, storing and transporting grain; and cotton cloth is essential for clothing in the areas where the minority lives (Ibid).

Even Levine (1974:56) goes on to label the persistent social marginalization and segregation of the minorities as a 'pan-Ethiopian social phenomenon'. Although there is no agreement, there are scholars who consider some form of the phenomenon as related to an Asian caste system (Pankhurst, 1999). The notion of pollution associated mainly to food taboos and evil eyes, strict social ostracism, such as endogamy rules, as well as occupation specifications epitomize the relationship between dominant farmers and marginalized craft workers (Ibid).

It has been argued that unjustified myths existing for generations among dominant farmers have perpetuated the marginalization of the occupational groups. The representation of marginalized groups in mythology varies from situations where they share kinship with the rest of the society to instances where they are seen more as associated with nature and the wild, and even, in extreme cases, having descended from

union with animals (Gebreselassie, 2003; Haaland, 2004; Lewis, 1962; Pausewang and Zewde 2002). Nonetheless, as Pankhurst (1999:503) argues the overall context of relations between occupational minorities and dominant groups is ‘structured clearly by political, social and economic marginalization’. Pankhurst and Freeman (2003) document that these people are not allowed to own any productive assets such as land; they do not participate in politics even in local assemblies, and they are not allowed to take part in any social events, are prohibited from entering farmers' houses, have separate seating at weddings and funerals, are restricted from joining associations and have separate burial places.

As the degree of marginalization varies over time and space, Pankhurst (1999) argues that the combined factors of migration, urbanization and religious conversion, first to the Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, then Islam, and, more recently, to the Protestant Church, have slowly improved the relations between the minority and the dominant groups. But this change is small scale and hence is not geared to overhauling the social hierarchy. As Dea (2007) states, the minorities are still marginalized and deprived from access to important sources of power and wealth. Political, social and economic structures are still shaped in such a way as to systematically exclude the marginalized groups (Ibid).

Dominant Group

The dominant population has, on the other hand, been at the forefront of benefiting from social services, including education. Their occupation as farmers is viewed as an important livelihood both locally and nationally. Although farmers live a traditional way of life, and rely on a subsistence, low input-low output, rain-fed farming system, agriculture accounts for nearly half of the country’s GDP (MoARD, 2010). As a result, national policies and strategies are geared to improving the productivity of that sector of the society. But still, individual farmers own only small scale farmland which is not sufficient to carry out other activities than food production for daily living. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), about a third of rural

households farm less than 0.5 hectares which, ‘under current yield levels, cannot produce enough food to meet their [families] requirements’ (Ibid:3).

In 2005, the government introduced a Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) which provides cash or food transfers to poor farmer households that should also help poor families to send their children to school and keep them there longer. The Ministry developed a policy geared to transform the rural population by ‘creating access to primary education for all school-aged children and thereby producing educated farmers and other workers who utilize new agriculture technologies’ (MoE, 2005:6).

Nonetheless, for various reasons, not all children from the dominant farmer groups are in school (Pereznieto and Jones, 2006; Schaffner, 2004; Tietjen, 1998; Bluffstone et al., 2008) and minority craft workers have received no education for centuries presumably due to long-established asymmetric power relationships. The more specific reasons for why children from the two groups are excluded from education are investigated in this study. What follows next is how the policy documents address UPE and exclusion of children from education.

2.2 Education Policies and Strategies on UPE Since 1990

In 1991, the country witnessed a change in government when the communist Derg regime was overthrown by the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). A new constitution was introduced in 1994 which created a federal system of governance (FDRE, 1994). Since its ascendancy to power, the incumbent government has undertaken a wide variety of reforms aimed at realigning the country’s social, political and economic institutions to the global development discourses.

One of the reforms was the placement of MDGs and EFA goals within the national development policy framework. The government introduced the Plan for Accelerated and

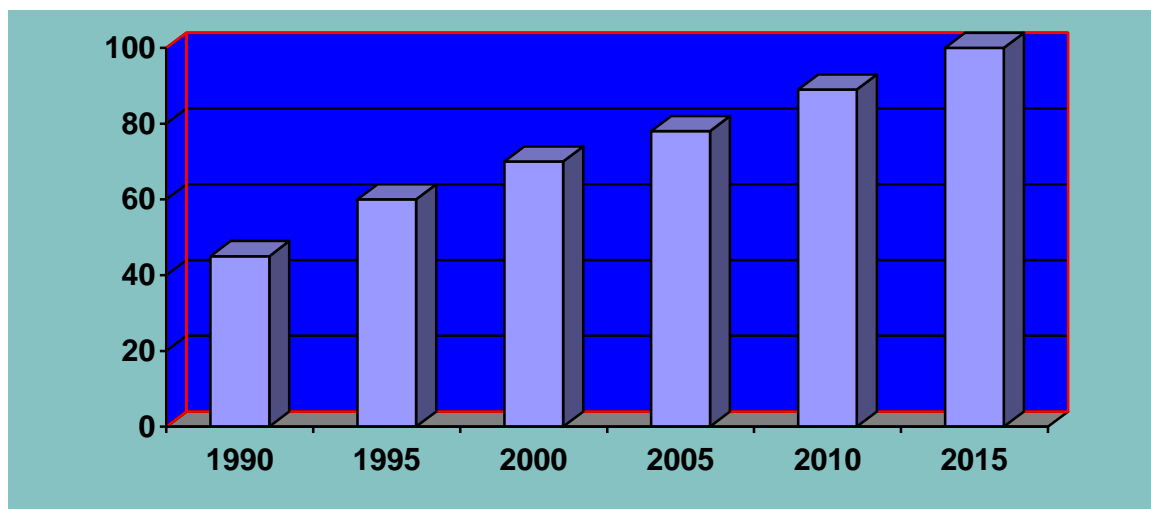
Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) policy and program spanning the period 2005/06-2009/10. The ultimate goal of PASDEP is to ensure human development of the poor generally, and of women in particular. It was preceded by the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP), a program to create human capacity, expand and build institutions, decentralize government, and mobilize the grassroots communities, including civil society. This was accompanied by massive public spending on pro-poor investments, and the launch of nationwide sector development programs to improve health care, education, and food security (MoFED, 2008).

The educational reform overhauled the previous regime's governance and structure of the system. The reforms were designed to reflect the ongoing global education agenda, mainly EFA. A new Education and Training Policy (ETP) was introduced four years after the Jomtien Conference, in 1994. The essence of the subsequent education strategies clearly reflects the commitment of the government to address the EFA goals, of which UPE is one. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) states that education is an important development strategy to eradicate poverty as well as an indispensable tool to produce human capital needed for the country's development. The vision is '...to see all school-age children get access to quality primary education by the year 2015 and realize the creation of trained and skilled human power at all levels who will be driving forces in the promotion of democracy and development in the country' (MoE, 2005:5). Neither the policy nor the constitution makes primary education compulsory. Rather, the constitution states that '...To the extent the country's resources permit, policies shall aim to provide all Ethiopians access to public health and education, clean water, housing, food and social security'(FDRE, 1994b. art. 90, § 1).

The education policy of 1994 acknowledged that, in terms of expansion of educational opportunities the country was lagging behind, even by African standards. In 1997, the government developed a sector wide approach, the ESDP as a part of the Twenty Year Education Sector Indicative Plan (1997-2016) which was translated into four consecutive ESDPs to reach the EFA goals as defined in the EFA Dakar Framework for Action in 2000. The main objective of the ESDPs is 'to improve quality, relevance, equity, and

efficiency and to expand access with special emphasis on primary education in rural and underserved areas, as well as the promotion of education for girls in an attempt to achieve universal primary education by 2015' (MoE, 2005:6).

The government has implemented free primary education since 1994. The ETP implementation document stipulates that 'the policy, ETP, provides universal and free primary education so that the children of peasants and the poor may not be denied the opportunity for mere lack of money' (MoE, 2002:127). This measure has tremendously increased the enrolment rate in the country. The gross enrolment rate (GER) at primary level has risen from 32 per cent in 1990/91 to 96.4 per cent in 2010/11. The NER has also risen to 89.3 per cent in 2010/11. As seen in the Figure 2.1, the NER is projected at 100 per cent by 2015.



Source: MoFED, 2010, p.13

Figure: 2.1 Net Enrolment Rate in Primary School (grade 1-8), 1990-2015 (Current and Projected Trends)

The number of children in school has more than tripled from 3.8 million in 1995/96 to over 14 million in 2006/07. At the same time, gender parity has improved dramatically with a ratio of 0.93 in the lower primary cycle (grade 1-4) by the end of 2010/11, from 0.87 in 2004/05 (MoE, 2011). According to the annual EFA Global Monitoring Report,

the country has made impressive improvements towards expanding access to education for all (UNESCO, 2011). Particularly, the country reduced the number of out-of-school children from 6.5 million in 1999 to 2.7 million in 2008 (UNESCO, 2011:41).

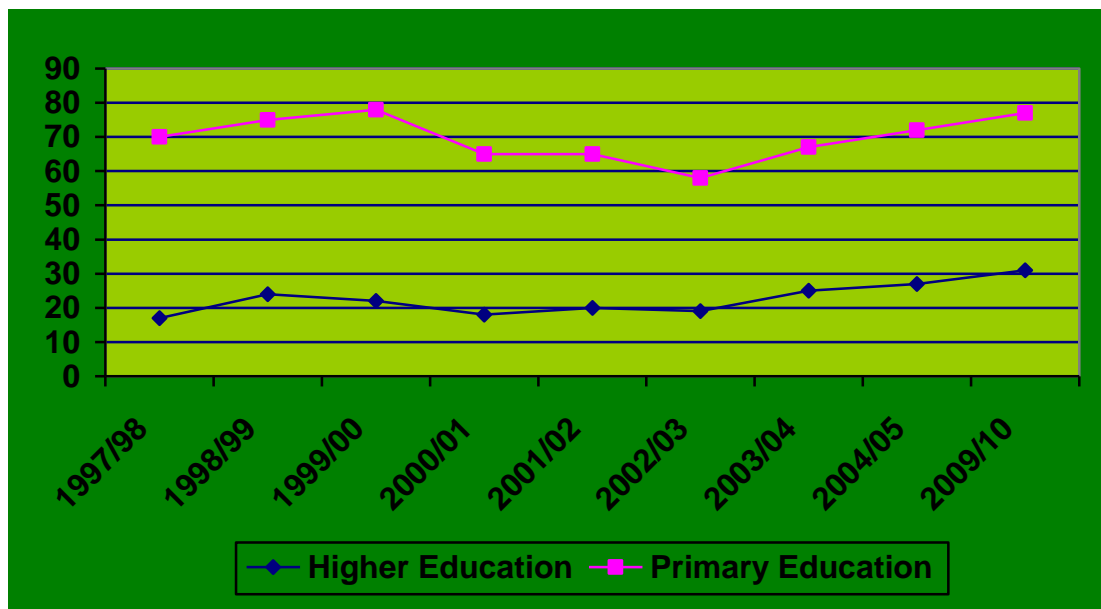
The massive mobilization to address the issue of access to education is undermining the quality of education in the country. The Joint Review Mission (JRM) of the ESDP III stressed that the efforts to improve quality education has so far been offset by the greater push given to increasing enrolment (MoE, 2006). The World Bank assessment of the country's education system in 2004 also indicated that the educational condition of the country is worsening in terms of the pedagogic conditions in the classroom as indicated in the pupil-teacher ratio, and the real spending per student on non-salary inputs had declined by about 20% during 1998-2003, as the result of massive enrollment increase (World Bank, 2004). For instance, the pupil per class ratio and pupil-teacher ratio at primary level in 2010/11 were 57 and 51 respectively which were higher than the target set by ESDP IV, namely 55 and 50 respectively. The drop out and repetition rates at primary level were 13.1 per cent and 8.9 per cent, respectively, in 2010/11 (MoE, 2011).

With the support of donors, massive expansion of schools has been undertaken in the country, particularly in rural areas. For instance, out of the 2,787 constructed primary schools during ESDP I & II during 1997-2005, more than 80 per cent were in rural areas (MoE, 2005). Over 120,000 new teachers have been recruited during the period (MoFED, 2008). Education's share of the national budget reached 22.8 per cent in 2007/08. Efforts have also been made to raise awareness, mainly in rural areas about the importance of education, and programmes were designed to enhance girls' participation by developing a five year female education strategy (MoE, 2005).

The ETP promises to deliver equitable and fair distribution of educational services to all in the country. Although it does not explicitly state that education is a right, it acknowledges that the '...expansion of quality primary education is not only a right of all Ethiopian citizens but also a guarantee for development' (MoE, 2002:15). It highlights that the goal of the policy is to provide a fair and equitable distribution of quality

education as rapidly as possible to all regions, particularly to rural areas where 85 per cent of the population live (Ibid). One way of doing that, according to the ETP, is through compensatory schemes for less developed regions and historically disadvantaged groups in the form of special financial support in the educational field. Article 3.9.4 of the ETP (1994) states: ‘special financial assistance will be given to those who have been deprived of educational opportunities, and steps will be taken to raise the educational participation of the deprived regions.’

Abolishing fees is believed to ensure an equitable distribution of education in the country, according to the ETP (MoE, 2002). Students are expected to share the costs of higher education with the government. This has allowed the government to allocate a greater portion of the education budget for the expansion of primary education and make it accessible to the underprivileged groups of society. As compared with other sectors in education, such as higher education, primary education takes the lion’s share of the education budget. Figure 2.2 below compares the share of higher education and primary education in the total education budget of the country.



Source: MoFED, 2010; MoE, 2011

Figure 2.2: Budget Share of Primary and Higher Education, 1997/98-2009/10

2.3. Decentralization of the Education System

2.3.1 Community Participation

Although the education sector programme states that the government has the prime responsibility of providing access to education for all school-aged children in the country, community participation and involvement in the education system is also viewed as an important instrument to improve access to education at local levels. The educational policy states that community participation serves two purposes in education. First, it is one way of improving the efficiency and accountability of the education system by handing decision making to local communities. Second, due to the limited ability of the government to expand schooling to all sectors of the society, community participation is viewed as a resource for local schools (MoE, 2002). The ESDP shows that, in order to increase ownership by the community, and for the governments to focus on higher levels of education, such as colleges and universities, the management of primary schools is the responsibility of communities (MoE, 2002; FDRE, 1994a; MoE, 2005). Studies have, however, documented that the main form of community participation in the education system in Ethiopia has been monetary contributions (Swift-Morgan, 2006; Oumer, 2009).

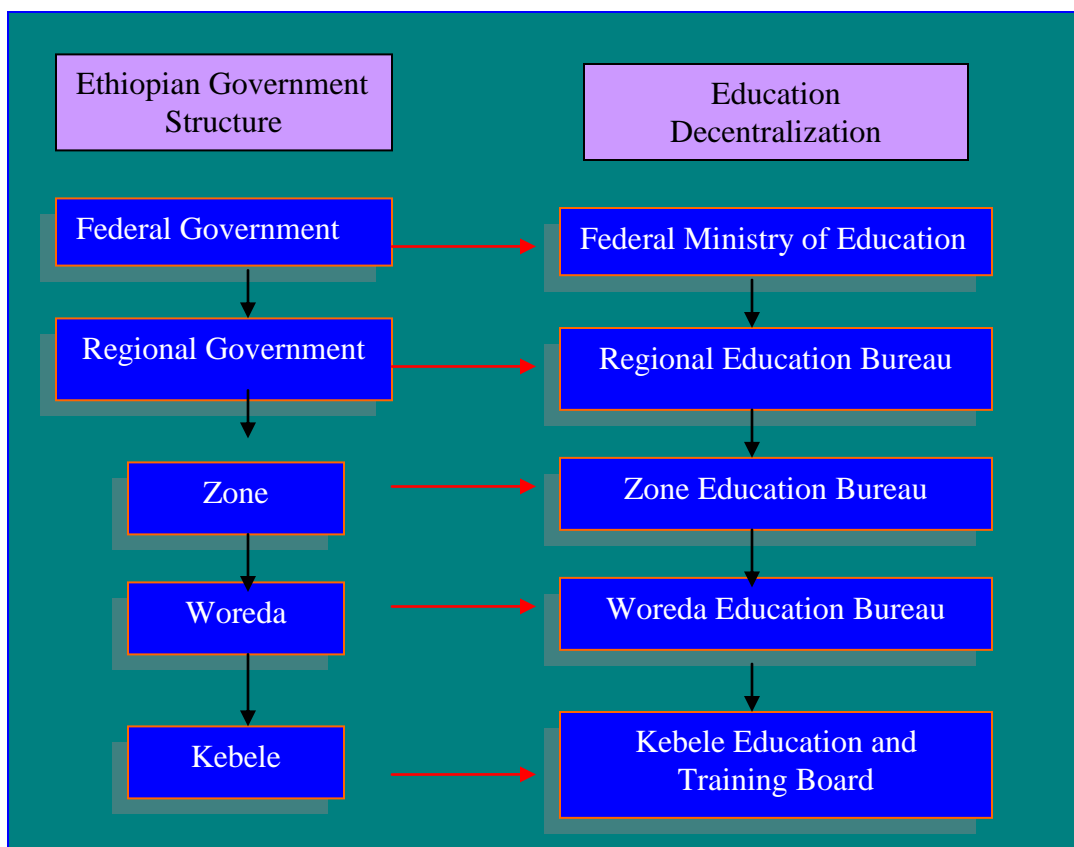
According to ESDP III, ‘communities will participate in the construction and management of schools. The community will contribute labour, local materials and cash, based on its own capacity, for the construction of schools and Alternative Basic Education Centers (ABECs). The community contribution will also include raising money to cover part of non-salary expenditure of schools when required and when communities have the capacity to do it’ (MoE, 2005:66). Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) play an important role in mobilizing community participation. They are active in raising the awareness of the community on the benefits of education and in encouraging parents to send their children to school so as to increase access and reduce dropout (MoE, 2005).

Although the policy states that community contributions should be based on capacity and willingness, ESDP IV discusses that the high direct cost of education to parents is a main reason why poor children do not enter school. Particularly, the document states that... ‘Where schools/woredas/regions decide to levy fees in a form of community contribution, they will need to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that no child is excluded from school because of inability to pay’ (MoE, 2010b:11). Reviewing the performance of ESDP III, ESDP IV, which was introduced in 2010/11, explicitly acknowledges that some communities are overburdened or overstressed by the contribution, which is termed ‘community fatigue’ (MoE, 2010b:52). It points out that the absence of policy on the extent of community contributions is affecting the very notion of its introduction in the decentralization of the education system in the country. The ETP, however, indicates that community participation, or leaving primary education to the community, is considered as one strategy of addressing equity in educational services. It notes that if rich communities are able to construct and maintain schools, then the government would focus on poor areas, thereby ensuring higher equity among communities (MoE, 2002).

2.3.2 Governance of Education in Ethiopia

The constitution introduced a federal system of governance in 1994. The education system was decentralized meaning that the management and decision making was distributed to regions and implemented at each levels of governance (Figure 2.3)

In terms of distribution of responsibilities at the different, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for establishing and administering tertiary institutions, developing the national education policy and supporting regional curriculum development efforts at all levels of education. Regional Education Bureaus (REB) are responsible for establishing and administering the second cycle of secondary education (Grades 11–12), and technical and vocational schools; the regional education policy and strategy; preparing the curriculum for primary schools and training primary school teachers.



Adapted from Yilmaz and Venugopal, 2008 and MoE, 2002

Figure 2.3: The Ethiopian Government Structure and the Levels of Education Decentralization in Ethiopia

Zones Education Bureaus (ZEB) serve as facilitators between the Regional Education Bureau and the Woreda Education Department. The bureau coordinates the purchase and distribution of educational materials; provides technical support to woredas and also performs other functions allocated to them by the Regional Bureau of Education. Woreda Education Bureaus (WEB) are in charge of establishing and administering basic education services, including primary schools (Grades 1–10) and adult education; ensuring equity in access to education; enhancing community participation by supporting citizen participation in educational administration; and encouraging and supporting PTAs. The Kebele Education and Training Boards (KETB) are the smallest administrative unit in the devolution of power, and they are expected to work hand in

hand with local primary schools and parents and the community at large (MoE, 2002). Hence, the WEB has the responsibility for UPE and for ensuring equity in access to education.

The decentralized system has seen mixed results so far. The government documents appraise it for creating community ownership of the education system at local level. Furthermore, it is stated that it has contributed to the increase in enrolment in regions with historically low enrolment (MoE, 2002). It also seems to have strengthened local governance, increased accountability, broaden the participation of communities, and improved school management and transparency (MoE, 2005). In reality, however, it has been claimed that the decentralized system has led to disparity among regions in the country (Ibid; MoE, 2010b).

2.4. Partnerships in Education

The Ethiopian Government also stressed the important role partnership is to play in realizing EFA and seeks the active involvement of other stakeholders (civil society and NGOs) in order to extend the quality and relevance of primary education to all school-aged children and expand standardized education and training programmes at all levels (MoE, 2005). The government explicitly states that NGOs are essential to realize UPE, particularly in terms of alternative basic education and non-formal education (MoE, 2002). According to the decentralized structure, the woredas have the highest power and responsibility in creating those partnerships as well as seeking collaboration to solve local problems. The education sector document clearly indicates that for its mission of providing quality education for all to be met, active participation of NGOs and the private sector is required.

However, in 2008, the government introduced a new proclamation in the country on regulating CSOs and NGOs. According to the government, this new proclamation was needed due to the growing numbers of CSOs and NGOs whose management structures

have complicated the current monitoring process, while others claimed that it was intended to curb their capacity to raise funds (Center for International Human Rights, 2009). NGOs presumably had a major role in the 2005 election when the government had a devastating result, and even before 2005, Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond and Wolf (2002:17) findings indicate that government officials worried about the ‘...NGOs’ hidden political agendas and lack of clarity as to whose and what interests NGOs claim to represent.’ Nevertheless, according to the new law, local and international NGOs that receive more than 10 per cent of their funding from abroad may not work on the advancement of human rights, promotion of gender equality, the right of children and disabled persons, conflict resolution or the efficiency of the justice sector (FDRE, 2009).

As a result of the proclamation, the number of NGOs has significantly decreased from 3,800 to 1,850 according to the registration conducted by the Ministry of Justice (USAID, 2010). More is, then, expected from woredas in terms of creating ties and links with stakeholders to solve the local problems.

The following analysis of the educational situation of out-of-school children from the two social groups is understood in the context of the outlined policies and strategies, and the governance system for education. To assist in explaining this, a theoretical framework has been constructed to identify factors for the exclusion of children from education. This includes existing literature on the determinants of education across different countries.

Chapter 3: Understanding Exclusion from Education

This chapter outlines how social exclusion theory and the rights-based approach together constitute a framework for analysis of the situation of out-of-school children in the selected area in Ethiopia. Social exclusion theory is used to understand how exclusionary mechanisms can lead children to be excluded from school, whereas the rights-based approach helps to determine the roles of government, parents as well as children in ensuring the education of a child. The chapter, moreover, outlines supply and demand factors that are identified as important determinants of education

3.1 Forms of Social Exclusion

The concept of social exclusion has appeared in social policy discourse in an attempt to relate to poverty, inequality and injustice in Europe during the crises of welfare states in the 1980s (Kabeer, 2000; Rawal, 2008). While different scholars have used the theory to examine various social problems, Kabeer's (2000) analytical framework is particularly interesting for this study because of her depiction of the role of social interaction and institutions to create and sustain exclusion. According to Kabeer, social exclusion occurs 'when the various institutional mechanisms through which resources are allocated and values assigned operate in such a way to systematically deny particular groups of people the resources and recognition which would allow them to participate fully in the life of that society' (Ibid:186).

Beall and Piron (2005) refer to social exclusion as a condition or outcome, on the one hand, and a dynamic process on the other. As a condition or outcome, social exclusion is a state in which excluded individuals or groups are unable to participate fully in their society. This may be either because of their social identity (for example race, gender), or

their social location (for example, remote areas). The multidimensional and dynamic process of social exclusion refers to the social relations and organizational barriers that block the attainment of livelihoods, human development and equal citizenship. Social exclusion may prevail at micro, meso and macro levels with multidimensional applicability. Individuals or groups or societies would be partly or totally excluded. Le Grand (2003) argues that social exclusion, voluntary or involuntary, compromises social solidarity and challenges the bid to ensure equal opportunity for all.

In this study, the theory is used particularly to examine the exclusion of children from education. As outlined in the previous chapter, the minorities are excluded from the society in which they live due to institutional and structural factors. Minority groups can be trapped in a hybrid form of exclusion where economic and cultural disadvantages come into effect (Kabeer, 2000). Economic disadvantage often emanates from exploitation, marginalization (exclusion from the main livelihood or confinement to poorly paid, undesirable form of work) and deprivation (being denied an adequate standard of living). Cultural disadvantage, on the other hand, is a form of injustice manifested in the ways in which dominant social groups seek to impose dominant values, or routinely devalue and disparage certain groups (Kabeer, 2000:84).

Often, one form of disadvantage is accompanied by or may give rise to other forms of disadvantages. While cultural disadvantage is primarily associated with despised identities, it is frequently accompanied by economic discrimination where there are greater difficulties in finding employment, informal livelihood strategies and inadequate government provisions. These forms of exclusion call for strategic responses to tackle the disadvantages. Where the disadvantage is economic, economic strategies which focus on redistribution between the disadvantaged and advantaged group is required. For the cultural disadvantage, the question of identity should be answered in terms of recognition. When the disadvantage is a hybrid form, mobilizations which straddle redistribution as well as recognition are important (Kabeer, 2000).

This thinking helps to examine the effects of economic as well as valuational disadvantages in relation to why children's right to education particularly, for potters, is denied. In a broader way, Frota (2007) shows how the interplay among the economic, social and political dimensions is accountable for the creation and continuation of social exclusion. Using the concept of social exclusion, therefore, enables researchers to simultaneously consider the economic, political and social dimensions of deprivation problems.

According to Kabeer (2000), institutions are central in creating and sustaining exclusion through rules of membership and access. States, markets, communities as well as the family have their own principles of membership and forms of access. This principle of membership underlines principles of exclusion and inclusion. Hence, this theory has a wider application of the concept of social exclusion. The issue of exclusion from education which, in this case is exclusion from schools and infrastructure, may require examining rules of school entry. It also encompasses the wider rules which disentitled the groups from accessing important services, including education. The rights- based approach, which is dealt below, helps to understand the role played by different stakeholders in education either in alleviating or sustaining the issue of exclusion from education.

Bennet's (2005) division of institutions into formal and informal ones is important. He underlines that we need not only to refer to the written rules and policies of institutions [formal], but also to behaviours, values and norms that are deeply embedded [informal]. Apart from the role of institutions in excluding particular groups, groups may prefer to exclude themselves because 'it allows them to define their own values and priorities (Kabeer, 2000:88). The denial of access to education may, then, emanate from the groups' preference to keep their children away from public institutions, including schools. It is, therefore, considered important to rigorously examine exclusionary processes and institutional make ups which are both implicit and explicit in nature.

3.2 The Rights-based Approach

Under the rights-based approach to education, education is considered as a basic human right. This conception of education goes back to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It states, amongst others, that everyone has the right to education, and that education shall be free so that no child is left out of school (UN, 1948). This has become a springboard for international agreements, including the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education of 1960, the International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of 1966, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989. The approach has been reinforced in recent decades with the introduction of the international EFA goals (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007).

The approach underlines the intrinsic importance of education as a right. It positions education as an empowerment right by which ‘...economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities’ (Beiter, 2006:30). In the same token, Freire (2000) underlined the empowerment role of education for excluded minorities in demanding their rights by raising awareness, or ‘conscientisation’.

The rights-based approach to education places the primary responsibility for ensuring good quality education on the state. Governments have obligations to develop legislation, policies and support services to remove barriers in the family and community that impede children’s access to school. They should take action to ensure the provision of education that is both inclusive and non-discriminatory and that is adapted to ensure the equal opportunity of every child to attend. This primarily includes ensuring the right to, in and through education. The denial of the right to education is a fundamental threat to the basic human rights which eventually exclude children from the right in and through education.

The contents of the right to education are structured into the 4-As: availability (establishment of schools and ensuring free and compulsory education for all), access (compulsory education free of charge), acceptability (guaranteed minimal standard of education) and adaptability (schools have to adapt to children) (Tomasevski, 2003:51). The realization of the right to education, according to the approach, requires addressing possible tensions because of differing objectives and responsibilities among governments, parents and children as they are the principal players (UNICEF/UNESCO, 2007:21). These differing objectives need to be reconciled in order to realize the right to education. They constitute a triangular relationship among the parties, as depicted in Figure 3.1.

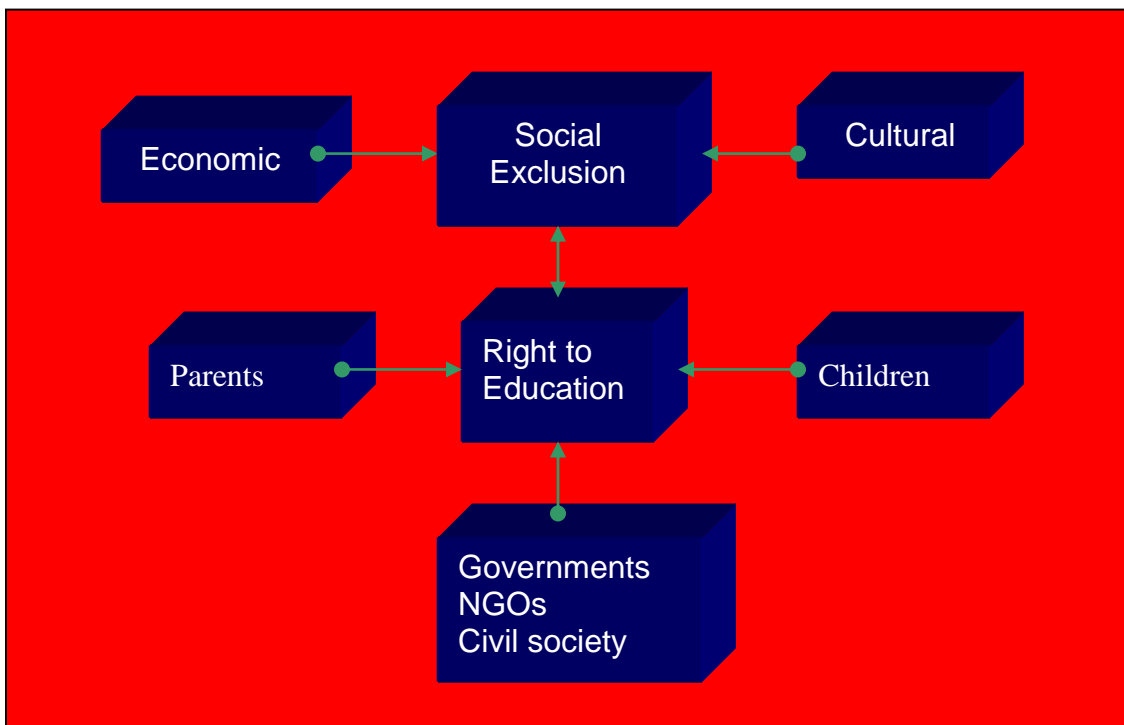


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework

Figure 3.1 highlights how the two theories are combined to help analyze the situation on the ground. The bidirectional arrow between the right to education and social exclusion shows the two way influences that exist between them. Exclusion in society can be

related to both economic and cultural disadvantage which may, in turn, exclude children from school.

Governments are responsible for providing education to the wider society, and institutionalizing administrative and legal frameworks to monitor the rights. They also have the responsibility to fulfill, respect and protect the right to education of a child. Policies both at national and local levels should be designed in a way to address the right to education a child. Hence, evaluating the progress of the right to education requires the examination of the already formulated policies and their implementation. This was the main rationale for scrutinizing important policies and strategies in Chapter 2.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. According to the UDHR (1948), parents may seek the reinforcement and promotion of their collective beliefs or individual values. The influence of their beliefs or values depends on the extent of their involvement in school matters and on their capacity to fully understand the importance of education for their children. Hence, community participation aimed at improving the level of education and awareness of parents is crucial for the realization of the right to education. As right holders, the children's perceptions of acquiring the capacity to fulfill her/his aspirations also need to be considered.

Other actors, such as NGOs, teachers and the private sector, have significant contributions and responsibilities with respect to realizing the right to education. As Pogge (as cited in Robeyns, 2010) argues, their involvement is, however, contingent on whether human rights are considered as a legal or a moral right. If human rights are considered as a legal right, governments are politically responsible and can determine what NGOs and other stakeholders should do. Conversely, as a moral right, everyone should help realize this right since it is her/his moral obligation.

The rights-based approach has been criticized in a number of ways. First, the concept of universality with regard to education is, according to some scholars, superfluous and

regarded as exclusively western (Panikkar, 1982). Pannikar argues that cross-cultural beliefs impede such concepts from being universally applicable across cultures. In the case of Africa, diverse cultural beliefs and social diversification would instead lead to varying applicability of the concept across and within countries (Greany, 2008). Second, the concept is often criticized as being rhetorical since there are still millions of children out of school despite its international acceptance across the world. Third, the understanding of human rights as legal rights would make governments exclusively accountable for their realization despite the fact that governments generally are the main protectors as well as the main violators of human rights (Tomasevski, 2003).

Notwithstanding the above critiques, the approach has been regarded as useful for considering how the right to education can be fulfilled and the different roles required by different actors to overcome exclusion from education. The more specific factors that contribute to exclusion from education are outlined in the following both in a general sense and as specifically related to Ethiopia.

3.3. Determinants of Education

A huge number of empirical studies exists on factors that hamper the enrolment and attainment of children in education in different parts of the world. They highlight an ongoing debate on whether household (demand) or school (supply) factors are most important in determining children's enrolment. This distinction is applied to the following review of relevant studies related to the developing world, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa.

3.3.1 Demand-Side Determinants

The majority of empirical studies take households as their unit of analysis. They have been conducted in different socio-economic, cultural and political contexts and have identified an array of household factors. However, there is consensus that the majority of

children who are not in school are from households that are excluded from participating in the mainstream economy or/and have been disadvantaged in other ways compared to the rest of the population (Sackey, 2007; Lewin, 2009; Kadzamira and Rose, 2003). Factors considered significant in schooling decisions are presented below.

Parent's Education

Parents' educational status seems to play an important role in determining children's schooling (Sathar and Lloyd, 1994; Parikh and Sadoulet, 2005; Ilon and Moock, 1991). Parents with particular levels of education or literacy acquisition seem to acknowledge the value of education for their children and are determined to keep their children in school. The importance of mothers' education is particularly important notably for the education of girls. Based on survey data from 2,500 rural households, Ilon and Moock (1991) indicated that mothers' education has a positive effect on children's school participation in lower income households in Peru. In Kenya, using a welfare monitoring survey, Deolalikar (1997) found that the effect of mother's education on primary school enrolment in the poorest quintile is two to three times larger than that of father's education. Similar studies conducted by Moe and Levison (1998), Rose and Al-Samarrai (2001), and Sathar and Lloyd (1994) underlined the substantial influence of mothers' education on sending children, particularly girls to school. In addition to parental education, Vijverberg and Plug (2003), using longitudinal survey data, indicated that children inherit interest and ability to be in school from their educated parents.

Literacy

Similarly, a certain literacy level at household and community level has been found to be significantly influential in schooling decisions of a child (Afzal et al., 2010; Handa, 2002; Chudgar, 2009; Kadzamira and Rose, 2003). In most empirical studies, household literacy is a more important factor than all other household determinants, such as family size, gender and age of the head of the household, area of residence, household ownership, proportion of disabled children in the household and dependency ratio (Afzal et al., 2010). For instance, using Indian national rural household survey data, Chudgar

(2009) described that an improvement in parental literacy increases the probability of school enrolment by 9-21 per cent depending on the regions from where the data came. In rural Mozambique, Handa (2002) also found that improving adult literacy has a larger impact on children's school participation than raising household income.

Economic Status

There are also studies which emphasize the economic status of parents as the most decisive factor influencing parents' decisions on schooling. Poverty at the household level, which is partially expressed in terms of low income and low occupational status, highly alters parents' tendency towards sending a child to school. Using the household as the unit of analysis, studies show how the poor have been denied of access to education (Burney and Irfan, 1995; Awaleh, 2007; Björkmany, 2005). Poverty at the national level also often leads to reduced government expenditure for education. This often leaves much of the burden to parents or communities in general, which is a problem for the poor. Using demographic and health survey data from 35 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, Filmer and Pritchett (1998) stated that, to a large extent, it is the poor who is excluded from school participation due to poverty and social disadvantage.

Costs of Schooling

Among the manifestations of poverty at household level, as documented by many studies, are the inability to cover all the costs of schooling by parents, and extensive use of child labour. In an effort to achieve universal primary education and to help the poor send their children to school, education has become free in many countries. As a result, there has been a tremendous increase in enrolment, particularly for children from the poor households in countries, such as Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Malawi, to list just a few (World Bank, 2009). However, school fees only account for a small portion of what parents have to incur in order to send their children to school (Behrman and James, 1999). Additional marginal increments in costs often result in decisions not to send a child to school because of the adverse relationship between the income of parents and children's schooling for the lowest quartile of the poor (Hamid, 1993; Handa, 2002; Vera

and Jimenez, 2010; Björkmany, 2005; Asadullah, Chaudhury and Christiansen, 2006; Grimm, 2011; Behrman and James, 1999).

In calculating the cost of schooling, parents include clothing, shoes, and stationeries in addition to school fees. Studies done in Malawi (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003), Bangladesh (Awaleh, 2007), Kenya (Omwami, and Omwami, 2009), Mozambique (Handa 2002), Ghana (Lavy, 1996) and Ethiopia (Schaffner, 2004) documented that the cost that parents incur for their children's schooling is one of the major barriers. Furthermore, the opportunity cost of schooling put pressure on parents, particularly those who depend on child labour as a way to generate income.

Child Labour

Studies have shown that there is a direct relationship between poverty and child labour (Arends-Kuenning and Amin, 2004; Awaleh, 2007). In order to highlight the extent of economic (low income) factors, a number of empirical studies have been conducted in an effort to examine the effectiveness of stimulation programmes, such as, stipends, to parents to send their children to school. Studies conducted in Bangladesh, (Arends-Kuenning and Amin, 2004; Wodon and Ravallion, 1999), using longitudinal data before and after introducing monetary incentives to rural households, revealed an increment in child enrolment. It also reduced the incidence of child agricultural labour in the rural areas studied. However, it was also noted that intrinsic incentives were important to bring all children to school and continue their studies. Handa (2002), using national household surveys in rural Mozambique, however, found that literacy campaigns that highlight the value of education are more significant than income interventions for parents' decisions to send their children to school.

Children are sometimes given the responsibility to generate income for their parents in times of income crisis or they are involved in non-income household chores at the expense of schooling. Using primary school data from Uganda, Björkmany (2005) found that income shocks in a household have negative and highly significant effects on children's enrolment in primary schools, particularly for girls. As Levison and Moe

(1998) documented, household chores are the main deterring factor for girls in rural Peru. Poverty adversely affects girls' schooling along with negative cultural beliefs (Filmer, 1999; Arif et al., 1999).

Family Size

The interplay between family size and parents' investment in their children's education has been the focus of empirical studies which argue on the ground of a resource dilution effect (Guimbert et al., 2008; Gomes, 1984; King and Alderman, 1998; Maralani, 2008). Since family resources are limited, particularly in poor households, having many children in the family will exhaust parents' expenditures on their children's education. Hence, family size exhausts family resources, thereby adversely affecting the educational decisions parents make. It was also stated that in some studies large family size provides a chance for younger children to attend school while leaving older children to help their parents generate incomes.

3.3.2 Supply-Side Determinants

Unlike research on household factors, research on supply-side determinants of schooling examines school processes and material inputs in their analysis of enrolment and attainment.

Availability of Schools

Among supply side determinants, the availability of schools and distance to school are the foremost factors which determine the enrolment of children. A study using experimental design conducted by Burde and Linden (2009) in the Ghor province of Afghanistan, highlighted that having a community-based school in a village increased the enrolment of children by 56 per cent, reflecting the fact that the majority, but not all, children would attend if schools are readily accessible. This amounted to an increase in

enrolment of 47 percentage points after accounting for prior enrolment of children in schools outside the village.

When children have to walk less than one mile, there is 70 per cent enrolment; when children live two or more miles away, there is 30 per cent enrolment (Ibid:29). In Ethiopia, after controlling for socioeconomic differences across households, Schaffner (2004) showed that each additional kilometer of distance from the nearest primary school reduces school registration rates by two to three percentage points, up to distances of 12 to 15 kilometers.

School Fees

Other supply side measures taken by governments in developing countries include eliminating school fees so that children from all groups can join. The World Bank (2009) shows that school fees feature importantly in family budgets, so that even small increases in fees can have large enrollment benefits. This sensitivity to fees means that compulsory attendance laws are not closely linked to levels of enrolment. However, in situations where costs of education are seriously reduced or eliminated, usually with substantial support from donors (Clemens, Radelet and Bhavnani, 2004), enrolment soars.

Quasi-experimental evidence from Colombia, following the introduction of a fee reduction program based on income in Bogotá in 2004, further shows a significant effect of cost-reduction, raising the probability of enrolment of the poorest children by three per cent (Barrera-Osorio, Linden and Urquiola, 2007). In Bangladesh, girls' school enrolment has grown from roughly half the level of boys' schooling to slightly surpassing the boys' level due to a Female Stipend Program (FSP) begun in the early 1990s that pays parents to keep their daughters in school (Arends-Kuenning and Amin, 2004).

School Facilities

Other supply side factors, such as teacher training, availability of books as well as class size, have also influenced access to education and quality of learning. Deolalikar (1997)

describes the dilemma policy makers face in developing countries regarding school facilities and teacher-student ratio, since these could have opposite effects on poor households and non-poor households. Expanding school facilities would increase children's enrolment from the poorest quartile but has little impact on children in the top quartiles. Improving quality through the teacher-student ratio and textbooks would increase enrolment of the richest quartile which, on the other hand, negatively affects the poorest children.

This is because improvements in the teacher-pupil ratio often happens at the expense of other schooling inputs, such as bursaries and scholarships, that primarily help poor students to attend primary school. This view is supported by Buchmann and Hannum (2001) who argue that developing countries do not have the capacity to compromise between the two scenarios given their scarce resources, mainly budgetary that predominantly finance teacher salaries.

3.3.3 Other Factors

Conflict and Fragile Situations

The status of a country highly determines its capability of providing schools and other social services. A country that fails to provide key services to its population, including education, would have a higher number of children left out of school (Mosselson et al., 2009; Chauvet and Collier, 2007). In a qualitative investigation, that attempted to understand children's perspectives and experiences of the barriers to accessing primary education in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it was found that conflict and violence are the main barriers to educational access for children. Parents would not send their children to school due to the growing volatility of the country and the failing education system as a result of incapacity of the government in power. Hence, the case of fragile states contributes both to supply- and demand-side barriers to accessing education. Conflict and insecurity limit the provision and expansion of infrastructure, including

teacher training, ultimately crumbling the whole education system (Guimbert et al., 2008; Save the Children, 2010).

Caste and Ethnicity

There are also studies which attribute the prevalence of certain groups excluded from education due to socially constructed marginalization (Castro-Leal et al., 1999; Fleisch, Shindler and Perry, 2010). In some countries, certain groups are systematically excluded from education, such as Peru's and Nepal's indigenous people (Stromquist, 2007; Stash and Hannum, 2001) and India's untouchables (Chudgar, 2009). Stash and Hannum (2001) using representative data from Nepal's fertility, family planning and health survey, highlight that, in the contemporary era, caste and ethnicity continue to determine children's educational opportunity through stratifying mechanisms. More importantly, there is no government initiative to address the issue despite the increasing adverse effects on children's destinies.

There are influencing factors at all levels. In some countries, such as India and Nepal, the issue of caste determines the fate of children across the whole country, whereas in Ethiopia, discrimination prevails at regional and community levels. Studies suggest that rapid enrolment increase does not necessarily mean narrowing educational disparities by caste in Nepal (Stash and Hannum, 2001:5). In China, despite sharp economic growth accompanied by rapid enrolment, ethnic differences in attainment and enrolment continued to prevail (Hannum, 2002). Bam Dev Sharda (1977, as cited in Stash and Hannum, 2001) in his study of caste and social mobility in 11 villages in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, India, found that the effects of caste on education are stronger than any other factor. Illiteracy levels were observed to be low among high castes and high among the lowest castes.

Examining data from schools, colleges, and other educational institutions in Uttar Pradesh, Haq (1992, as cited in Stash and Hannum, 2001:358) found that despite modernization, higher castes continue to dominate educational opportunities, including

teaching and other positions in schools and universities. He concluded that educational inequality is a function of an overarching social inequality since education systems mirror inherent value structures that are opposed to equalization of opportunities. More importantly, he states how the system of modern education perpetuates caste dominance: From the apex of the organizational hierarchy to the bottom, caste dominance persists and manipulates the educational structure along caste lines in order to strengthen its traditional control.

3.3.4 Determinants of Education in Ethiopia

Of the demand and supply factors mentioned in the general literature, the following seem to be particularly relevant to Ethiopia.

Perception of Education

Empirical studies show that low perceptions of the value of education substantially hinder the schooling of children in most rural parts of the country (Roschanski, 2007; Weir, 2010). According to the World Bank (2005:135), '[...]a plausible barrier to schooling of children may simply be the fact that parents themselves have not been to school and have no idea what schooling can do for their children'.

Several reports have indicated that the existence of low awareness and perceived low utility of education among the rural population is the main factor for under-enrolment, particularly in the rural areas of the country (Shibeshi, 2005; MoE, 2006). This might be because rural areas of the country have been out of reach for any kind of educational facilities or schools for many decades in the past. Even today, not all areas of the country have schools, in particular in remote and pastoral communities.

Gender discrimination is also evident in parental decisions on their children's schooling. In many parts of the country, there are wide gender disparities despite efforts to close the gender gap. There is a long-established low value regarding girls' education in many

parts of the country. The diverse problems that parents face with regard to schooling are more pronounced with respect to girls' education. Cultural beliefs that girls should be left at home and get married early and the commonly expected low future return on investing in their education are the main factors influencing parents (Schaffner, 2004; Fuller et al., 1991; Weir, 2010).

Cost of Schooling

Poverty, in its multifaceted dimensions, is a prominent factor to explain parents' inability to send their children to school, particularly in the rural areas. Despite the rhetoric of free primary education, parents continue to incur indirect costs of schooling, and sometimes school fees (Pereznieto and Jones, 2006; Schaffner, 2004; Tietjen, 1998). Using longitudinal household data from 2000 through 2005 to determine the progress of the MDGs in rural Ethiopia, Bluffstone et al. (2008) revealed that there was a periodic income shock (rise and fall) by one-third in a year. This meant that parents often could not afford schooling, leaving most of the MDGs less likely to be achieved within the time frame, particularly universal primary education. Similarly, Roschanski (2007) and Björkmany (2005) also documented that due to the subsistence economy, households are unable to absorb frequent economic shocks, such as harvest failure or loss of livestock.

Child Labour

The prevalence of child labour is among the highest in the world (Admassie and Bedi, 2003). The extent of child labour participation in rural areas is very high due to the nature of the livelihood. Besides, it is attributed to the fact that parents, particularly in the rural areas, view their children in Ethiopia as an investment in terms of assuring the livelihoods of their families (CSA, 2001; Abebe and Kjørholt, 2009). According to Admassie and Bedi (2003), using rural household data from peasant associations, children have household and farm responsibilities as early as at the age of four years and on average contribute 29-30 hours of labour per week in the rural areas surveyed. This trend manifests in low school attendance.

Another study by Cockburn and Dositie (2007), using rural household survey data, concluded that the marginal productivity of children is almost one-third to one-half of that of adults, implying that children and adults are almost perfect substitutes. Studies, such as Schaffner (2004), Tietjen (1998), Admassie (2003), and Jones et al. (2006) illustrate the prevalence of child labour in rural households and the adverse interplay with children's enrolment. As Cockburn (2000:10) states 'Existing studies on schooling in rural Ethiopia suggest that the income opportunities provided by (opportunity cost of) child labour constitute a major, perhaps the principal, reason for low school enrolment'.

The gender issue of child labour is also evident, leaving girls with heavier workloads than boys. It varies across rural-urban divisions, with boys and girls having more work in rural areas. Girls are engaged in activities, such as cleaning up animal dung, fetching water from rivers and farm work. Boys, on the other hand, are involved in activities, such as plowing, herding, harvesting, threshing and carrying wood (Poluha, 2007; Alemayehu, 2007). Most of these activities are done at the expense of the children's schooling.

Jones et al. (2005) attribute the prevalence of child labour, particularly on farm land, to the government's recent development strategy, Agricultural Development Led to Industrialization (ADLI). They argue that the strategy implies a labour-intensive agricultural development strategy as the main development policy. This heavy dependence on the rural labour force for national development would lead to increasing demands for child labour on one hand, and the continued need to have a large number of offspring to meet household labour needs on the other (Ibid).

3.3.5 Summary

Overcoming barriers to accessing schools in different countries has led to extensive research around the world. The fact that schools are situated in and interact with society characterized by unique socio-cultural, economic and political contexts has led to varied findings across the literature. The distinction between demand and supply side factors has

shown that factors or groups of factors differ across and within countries. Some factors, such as availability of schools, appear, however, to strongly determine parents' decisions of schooling for their children.

The urban/rural divide also appears to influence the decisions of parents regarding schooling of their children. For instance, parents' level of education would be a stronger determining factor for rural parents than for urban ones since the latter tend to have a higher level and awareness of the value of education. The same applies to the divide between the rich and poor in relation to the cost of schooling. In the case of Ethiopia, low expansion of education in rural areas seems to coincide with low awareness and poverty in terms of income to exclude children from poor households from education.

With regard to the occupational minorities, few empirical studies have been undertaken with regard to their school participation. A few scholars, such as Dea (2000) have analyzed social discrimination and the adverse poverty that affect minorities in Dawro, Southern Ethiopia. He states that the minorities in the area are highly discriminated against in terms of participation in social services, including education. This is also manifested in everyday social interactions and in their access to economic resources and political offices.

Dea (2000) argues that, despite the existence of widespread social discrimination throughout southern Ethiopia, there are no specific government initiatives to deal with the situation. Based on interviews with local people, minorities, and government officials, he concluded that social institutions, relations and practices are arranged in a way that sustains the status quo. Other sociological studies conducted by scholars, such as Feyissa (2003), Freeman and Pankhurst (2003), Fujimoto (2003), Petros (2003) and Senay (2003), have demonstrated the extent of social discrimination and its dimensions in various parts of southern Ethiopia, but not the groups' status and possible challenges with regard to sending their children to school which is the subject of this study. How this was done appears in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology of the research, including research designs and methods used to collect data in the field in Gofa Zuria woreda in Southern Ethiopia. The data were collected from the three core stakeholder groups: parents, officials and children.

4.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

There are two major approaches in social science research, quantitative and qualitative, although some scholars argue that the distinction between the two is questionable (Brock-Utne, 1996). The mixed methods approach is now often used by combining both qualitative and quantitative methods (Bryman, 2008). Each approach has its own set of philosophical assumptions and principles which assist researchers in approaching and dealing with the world under investigation (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2003).

The quantitative approach has its roots in positivism which broadly advocates for the use of natural science methods, such as experiment and survey to study the social world (Bryman, 2008). The positivist orientation considers the social world as a discrete object, independent of the researcher. Its ontological position holds that the social world external to the individual's cognition is a real world made up of hard and tangible structures. Hence, numerical measures and variables can be used to study human behaviour (Burrell and Morgan, 1985). Research based on the quantitative approach starts with a hypothesis and data are gathered to test the hypothesis. The aim is to develop generalizations to a wider population from a limited sample using a deductive approach.

The qualitative approach is embedded in interpretive social science. Unlike positivists, the interpretivist perspective contends that the social world is mainly relativistic and can only be understood from the point of view of individuals who are directly involved in the

activities which are to be studied (Burrell and Morgan, 1985). Hence, ontologically, interpretivism is dominated by the constructionist dimension which holds that social entities should be considered as social constructions built from the perceptions and actions of social actors. For the interpretive social researcher, the only reality is that constructed by the individuals involved in the research. In other words, social life exists as people experience it and give meaning to it (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Barton, 2006; Creswell, 1994). The methods used would largely be designed to use participants' own words and experience to elucidate the phenomena under study (Bryman, 2008; Patton, 2002). Unlike in quantitative research, categories emerge from the informants or participants' context-bound information as qualitative research progresses.

The qualitative researcher is interested in understanding how people make sense of their lives, experiences and the structure of the world. Instead of keeping at a distance from the reality and the informants, he/she heavily relies on the voices and interpretations of the informants, and keeps a minimum distance from those researched (Creswell, 1994). The researcher is, hence, the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. For this reason, the qualitative investigator admits his/her values and biases, as well as the authenticity of the information gathered from the field. He/she is also expected to faithfully report the realities.

This study employs qualitative research in an attempt to explore why children from the two different social groups are excluded from education and the role of different stakeholders and institutions in creating and sustaining this.

4.2 Rationale for Choosing the Qualitative Approach

The characteristics of qualitative research show that it is appropriate for studies like this one. The focus of the study is related to the different backgrounds of the two groups, a marginalized versus an advantaged group and how these contribute to excluding children from education. Stromquist (2001) argues that in order to capture the dynamics of social

exclusion and discrimination that children continue to face in the education system, qualitative research is urgently needed among scholars.

Qualitative methods allow the researcher to capture the complexity of social phenomena as expressed in daily life and with meanings the participants themselves attribute to these phenomena (Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Barton, 2006; Creswell, 1994). One cannot understand human actions without understanding the meaning that participants attribute to actions – their thoughts, feelings, beliefs and views. This would, for instance, help to understand the views of different stakeholders, including children, regarding the provision of education and the mechanisms for their exclusion from education.

Creswell (2003) describes the need to have more open-ended questioning, one characteristic of qualitative methods, in order to investigate the phenomena in depth as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. This creates an environment where the researcher interacts with the participants, thereby having first hand information and an opportunity to observe the settings personally. ‘Because thoughts, beliefs, and assumptive worlds are involved, the researcher needs to understand the deeper perspectives that can be captured through face-to-face interactions’ (Ibid).

4.3 Research Design

As described by Patton (2002:253), the research design depends on the purpose of the study, the audience of the study, the funds available, the political context and the interest/ability/biases of the researcher. Though often not straightforward, the research approach along with its philosophical assumptions would guide the selection of the research design (Bryman, 2008; Vulliamy, 1990).

To conduct this study, a case study research design was used. It was appropriate for exposing details of the participants’ views through using multiple methods in order to construct a richer, more nuanced picture of their reality. According to Tellis (1997) ‘Case

studies are multi-perspectival analyses. This means that the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them. This aspect is a salient point in the characteristic that case studies possess. They give a voice to the powerless and voiceless’.

Yin (2009:4) indicates that a case study is used when there is a need to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth, including important contextual conditions of the phenomenon. In other words, the case study method allows for retaining the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events and to study how people act and interact within their natural setting. For that reason, case studies often favour qualitative methods because they are considered particularly beneficial for the generation of intensive, detailed examinations of a case (Bryman, 2008:53; Yin 2009:19). Various types of case studies have been identified, including exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. The boundaries between each type are not straightforward, since they have significant areas of overlap. This study lies within the explanatory and exploratory typologies, seeking not only to describe and explain what causes children not to be in school, but also to explore the wider processes (social, economic as well as political dimensions) influencing the case.

In order to intensively examine a setting, case studies require defining a case or unit of analysis for the research. As this study concerns two groups, the marginalized and the advantaged, which are independent but comparable cases, it takes the individual group as a unit of analysis, making it a comparative two case study design. Under this design, informants such as children, teachers, parents, NGOs and government officials were included to provide a holistic picture of how various factors create and sustain the phenomena. The underlying social fabrics of the two different groups provide the bases for comparison, yet they are under one system of administration or political structure where policies and strategies are designed to serve both groups, emphasizing their similarity. The main principle, as described by Patton (2002), is how information-rich cases are selected, i.e. cases from which one can learn a great deal about matters of importance. In conducting case studies, Yin (1994) described the need to have the same methodological framework for each case in order to avoid possible errors in the findings.

The comparative nature of the cases also underscores the importance of using the same methodologies for each case.

The case study methodology has long been criticized as a ‘weak sibling among social science methods’ (Yin, 1994:19). While it does have disadvantages, rigorous attention and adherence to certain principles make it a sound method for certain types of questions, such as ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions when the researcher has little control over events, and when the central focus lies on the investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. Yin further points out that, ‘Case study research is remarkably hard, even though case studies have traditionally been considered to be ‘soft’ research. Paradoxically, the ‘softer’ a research technique, the harder it is to do, since great rigour is necessary to overcome the traditional criticisms of case study research’ (Yin, 1994:26).

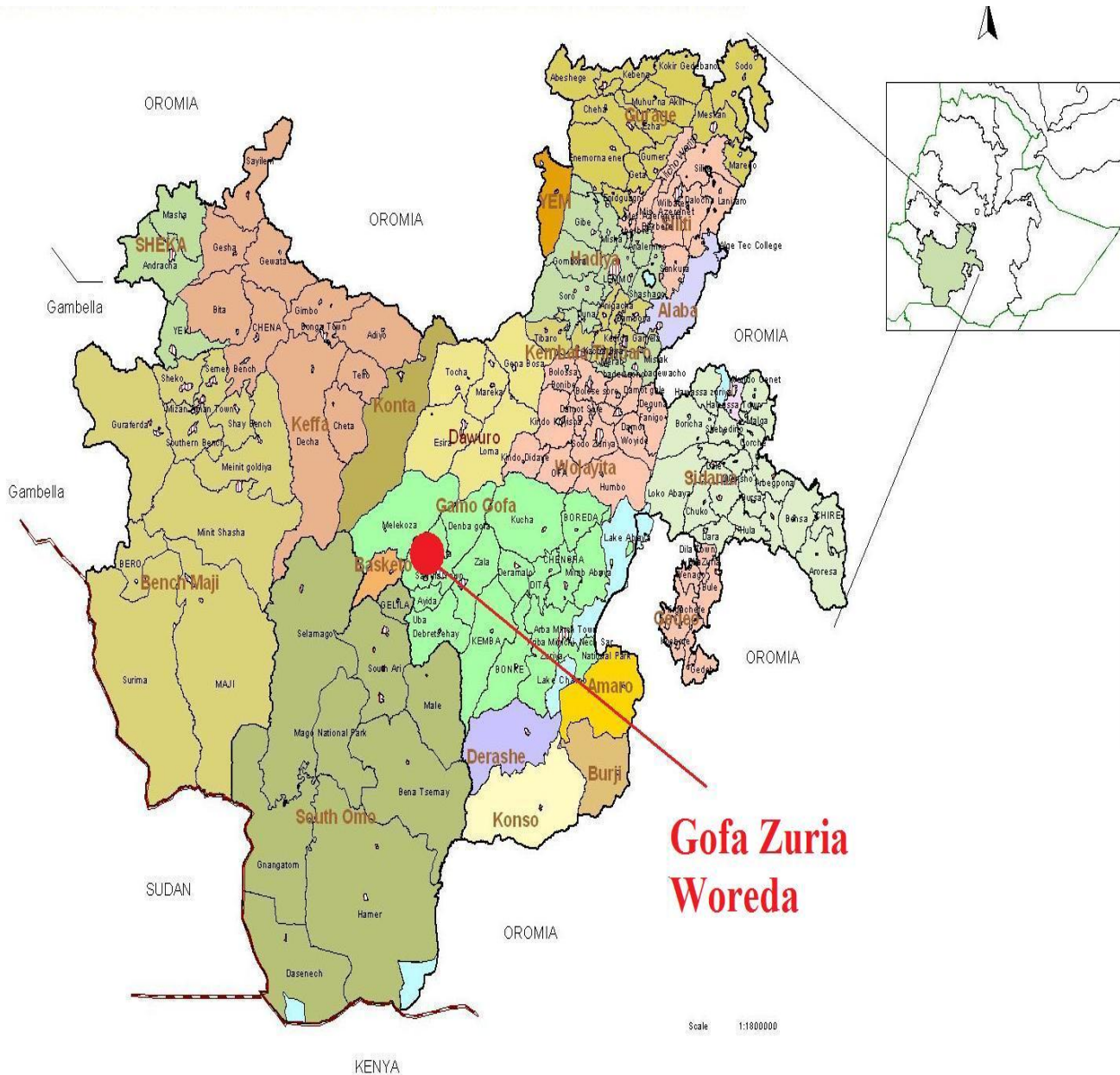
4.4 Gofa Zuria Woreda

The site for my study, i.e. Gofa Zuria woreda, is located in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regions (SNNPR) and it is one of the 77 woredas in the region (see Map 4.1). The administrative center of Gofa Zuria is Sawla. It has 38 kebele covering 97 hectares of land. The woreda is highly food insecure due to a combination of factors: high population density, therefore small landholdings for the majority of the households; frequent rainfall irregularities; and relative isolation, with poor roads and market access. It has poor coverage of health and education services. Fewer than one in five households are normally self-sufficient in staple food production, whilst the very poor fifth and the poor third of households, respectively, have received food aid (SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2008; USAD, 2006).

The livelihood is predominantly farming. The food crops are maize, enset, sweet potatoes, taro, teff and yams. Although all income groups sell crops to some extent, no one makes as much as half of the annual earnings from this. It is livestock and butter sales that bring the biggest portion of cash to the better-off and middle groups. On the

other hand, the butter sales bring in some 20 per cent of the annual cash earnings of the poor and very poor, and this is made possible by the system of caring for the stock of richer owners in return for a share of the milk. The very poor also gain about 20 per cent of their income from selling firewood and collected grasses (USAID, 2006).

Map 4.1: The Location of Gofa Zuria Woreda in Southern Ethiopia



There are several reasons for selecting this particular woreda for the study. First, both social groups, minority and dominant, live there (see Map 2.1). Second, I am from Sawla, the administrative capital of the woreda and grew up witnessing the interaction between the two groups. This triggered me to study these particular groups.

The region, SNNP, has achieved 92.2 per cent NER for the year 2010/11 (MoE, 2011). According to the woreda educational expert, the woreda seems to show an increase in enrolment due to an increase in the number of primary schools.

Table 4.1: Primary School Coverage and Enrolment in Gofa Zuria Woreda

Year	Primary School Coverage and Enrolment	
	Number of primary schools	Number of students
2006/07	31	15,614
2007/08	42	17,412
2008/09	47	19,663
2009/10	53	18,604
2010/11	57	16,757

Source: unofficial statistics collected in the woreda education office

The Gofa Zuria woreda had an increase in the number of students during 2006/07-2010/11, with a decline in 2010/11 by almost 10 per cent compared to the previous year (Table 4.1). The woreda educational expert explained that this was due to the appearance of the report before the end of the student registration period in some schools.⁴ However, as appears in Table 4.1, there was also a decline in enrolment in the previous year, by 5 per cent. The number of primary schools increased from 31 in 2006/07 to 57 in 2010/11.

⁴ The figures were made available by the Woreda educational expert. At the time of the data collection, most local schools were at the end of their school registration period which often lasts until mid-October each year.

4.5 Data collection

Research methods are techniques researchers employ to collect data from participants (Bryman, 2008). The methods employed in this study are focus group, and semi-structured interviews as well as personal observations and informal conversations.

4.5.1 Focus Group Interviews

A focus group interview is a group interview in which several participants, ranging from six to twelve, discuss a fairly tightly defined question. The focus is on the interaction within the group and the joint construction of meanings (Bryman, 2008:474-475).

Focus group discussions were conducted with two categories of informants: the parents of out-of-school children from the two groups, children from the two groups and one Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), (see Figure 4.1). The discussion was guided by pre-prepared open questions (see Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4). The intention was to allow individuals from the two groups to present their views on the issues raised during the discussion, and ‘...discuss a certain issue as member of a group’, rather than simply as an individual (Bryman, 2008:473). The group discussion created a sense of companionship and interaction. The representatives from the minority group appeared to be particularly enthusiastic and emotional when speaking about their situation in the area. A focus group interview was also designed for children within an age range of 10-15 years. Both genders were included in order to get their independent thoughts and perceptions. The sessions took up to two hours. All discussions were tape recorded and other key information was noted in a notebook.

4.5.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews serve to get an insight into issues that cannot be observed directly, such as people’s experience, knowledge, feeling, attitude, perspectives and activities that

happened at some point of time, how people organize and define their activities or the world, through questioning them (Patton, 2002). According to Bryman (2008:436), semi-structured interview ‘is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research’.

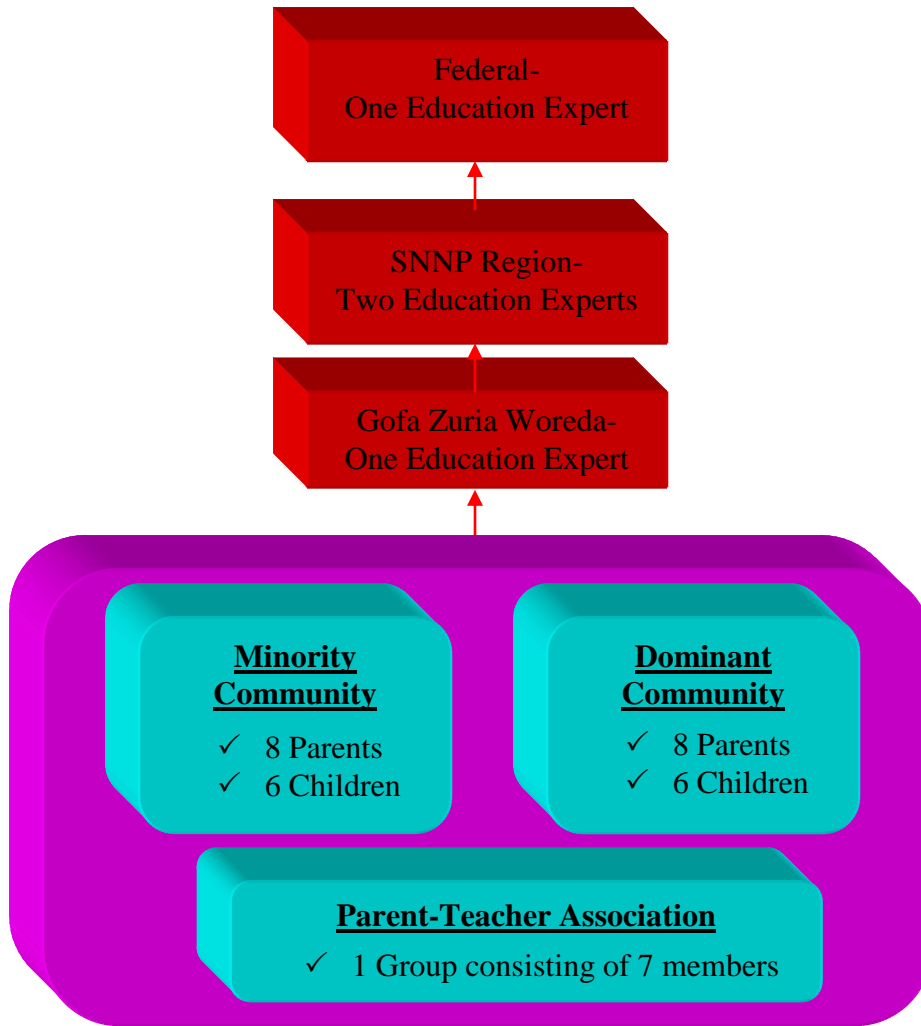


Figure 4.1: The Number and Categories of Interviewees

The semi-structured interviews were prepared to get perspectives from government officials on the situation on the ground for the two groups in particular and the trend of UPE in general. The interviews were conducted bottom up, starting with woreda officials and continuing to successive levels up to the federal level. At woreda and federal levels, one government official responsible for overseeing the development of universal primary

education was interviewed. At regional level, two government officials, one responsible for overseeing NGO participation in the region and the other responsible for ensuring UPE in the region, were included. Since there were no NGOs operating in the area, no interviews could be conducted with them. The interviews were guided by pre-prepared questions for each of the group of interviewees (see Appendix 5, 6, 7).

4.5.3 Document Analysis

Documents refer to already available sources of data that are not produced at the request of the researcher (Bryman, 2008). Such documents are important in case studies, ‘to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources’ (Yin, 2003:87).

In this study, important policy documents were analyzed to understand the policies, strategies and directives of the government regarding UPE. Specifically, the federal and regional government policies and strategies, such as the education policy, the consecutive Education Sector Development Programme I, II and III (ESDP), the new proclamation of Charities and Societies as well as the Annual Education Abstracts of the Ministry of Education (MoE) were consulted. The document analysis formed part of Chapter 2.

4.5.4 Other Methods

Observation and informal conversations are also used as methods of data collection. According to Bryman (2008), the major type of observation used in qualitative research is unstructured participant observation. The participant observer immerses him- or herself into a social setting, observing people’s behaviour, listening to their conversation and asking questions (Bryman, 2008:402).

During the field work, personal observation was used when visiting the community of minorities, particularly how children were involved in pottery production. It also helped to understand the nature of the interaction between the minority and dominant groups.

Informal conversations took place when informants offered additional information, normally after the formal discussion or interview sessions.⁵ This information sometimes contradicted what they had said in the formal sessions. It has been included in the study because the information was considered to be correct and valid. It happened particularly because some parents were afraid of speaking freely in the presence of the officials.

The data generated from the interactions with a group is often deeper and richer than when applying other methods, such as individual interviews, due to the fact that it involves debates and discussions with different people who have different opinions and views (Bryman, 2008; Marshall and Rossman, 2006). However, it may sometimes be difficult to manage if the group is too large. In this study, each group was to consist of ten people because I wanted to include both parents. Hence, I set up four discussion sessions: two with each of the two groups. At the end, only sixteen parents participated since three mothers and one father did not come.

4.6 Sampling

In qualitative research, participants are carefully selected on the basis of how information rich they are. Unlike quantitative research, attempts are not made to arrive at statistical generalization about the whole population. Rather, and particularly when using case study design, the goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytical generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (Yin, 1994:21). Often, the number of informants is kept low so that in-depth understanding about the phenomena under study can be carried out rigorously. In doing so, qualitative researchers should be vigilant when sampling participants because of the fact that the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings highly depend on the quality of the samples and sampling techniques. As Patton (2002:245) states, the validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher, than with sample size.

⁵ Double asterisks (**) is used in Chapter 5 to indicate that the information is given informally.

In line with the qualitative approach of this study, I adopted the purposive sampling technique. Ten families who have out-of-school children were selected from each social group in the Gofa Zuria woreda. Since there were more than one out-of-school child in a family, parents, exceptionally, gave the names of all of their school-aged children who had not been to school. From that list, a random sample of six children, three boys and three girls from each group, was taken.

The other key informants were one Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) consisting of seven people: namely two teachers, three parent representatives, one head of KETB and one school director. In addition, government officials at woreda, regional and federal were included. These informants are important particularly in setting policies which affect both groups, and in fighting the challenges of out-of-school children. For instance, PTAs have the responsibility for raising awareness of the community on the benefits of education and for encouraging parents to send their children to school. They are expected to work hand-in-hand with the community to solve educational problems. Government educational experts at each level are also important for designing strategies and policies and for implementing them.

4.7 Field work

The field work was done from the beginning of September to the end of October 2010. Before starting the research on the ground, a research clearance was obtained from federal, regional and woreda offices to get access to the target population. Since schools and PTAs had no statistics on out-of-school children, kebele officials organized and gathered parents who had children that were not in school. Parents, at first, did not want to be singled out and participate in the study since the issue of out-of-school children is a sensitive one in the area. Even when informed about the very purpose of the study, most parents were not convinced by its authenticity and many opted not to participate.

The selection process was done by going from house to house, asking whether parents were willing to participate in the study as well as describing the place and time of the interview session. Parents were also asked if they would allow their children to take part in the study. When realizing that the study was unrelated to politics, some of them expressed their willingness to participate. As most parents work in the field, focus group discussions were conducted in the evenings and on weekends. The purpose of the research was reiterated before the start of the focus group interviews and explanations were given related to the questions that would be asked. The discussion was conducted in both the local, Gofigna, and the official, Amharic, languages. There was no use of translation.

Managing a group discussion in an environment where people are not used to sharing and discussing often proves to be difficult (Patton, 2002). In the concrete case, the discussion was often at first dominated by a few people, particularly male parents, and I had to encourage everyone to speak freely and contribute to the issues raised. Because parents knew each other and had the same status in the community, all participants gradually became involved in the discussion.

As Patton (2002) describes, probes are an important instrument in qualitative research. They are primarily follow-up questions used to encourage the informant(s) to tell more and to clarify a specific point. These proved to be crucial. There were occasions when parents said, for example, ‘The primary reason we have kept our children at home is for financial reasons, such as the costs of school fees’. My curiosity was immediately aroused and when asking ‘Would you send your children to school if you received financial aid from the government or another institution?’ Then, more details would follow and one parent said ‘There would still be gaps that financial aid could not fill, for instance, we have livestock. Who would herd if we had to send all of our children to school? We have farmland where children are supposed to take part.’

Regarding interviews with children, I had to assume the role of a ‘funny guy’ in order to encourage them to speak freely. As with their parents, I informed them about the purpose

and the general kinds of questions, and solicited their views on schooling, why they failed to go to school from their own perspective, and how they felt about it. Two focus group discussions were held for the two groups, comprising six children, of whom three were girls. After the data collection, I did preliminary analysis of the data I had gathered so far from the key informants, parents and their children and from my personal observations.

The next groups of informants were PTAs and educational experts at woreda, regional and federal level. Focus group discussion was used with the PTA, and semi-structured interviews with the officials. With regard to interviews at woreda, regional and federal levels, officials were very cooperative and the interviews were conducted in their offices. At the federal level, there is no unit responsible for primary education, or addressing universal primary education. The task force under the Ministry of Education is instead organized into formal and non-formal education. I had difficulty in identifying who was responsible for the issue of out-school-children or the EFA policy and most Heads of Departments turned down my request for an interview, referring instead to the Communication Affairs Directorate. I finally conducted an interview with the one in the directorate whom the ministry considered to be an expert on the current trends of UPE in the country.

4.8 Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis ‘consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing otherwise recombining both qualitative and quantitative evidence to address the initial proposition of the study’ (Yin, 2003:109). Data analysis started with transcribing and translating interview records followed by coding, and then by categorizing. The data were categorized into different but interrelated factors. The data analysis was corroborated with the document analysis and has been interpreted within the theoretical framework and literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and 3.

In order to classify and simplify the qualitative data gathered from the different informants, a coding scheme was developed. Hence, each quote in Chapter 5 is followed by a code referring to the origin of the quote. For instance, quotes from potter parents are coded [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010], referring to the focus group interview with minority parents followed by the date. Other keys are: interview, INT; dominant group, DOM; children, CHI; woreda, regional and federal educational experts, WEX, REX and FEX.

4.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are concepts that are generally associated with quantitative research. In qualitative research, they relate to concepts, such as trustworthiness, authenticity and dependability (Bryman, 2008; Patton, 2002; Creswell, 1994; Brock-Utne, 1996). Accordingly, validity would refer to trustworthiness, providing a fair and balanced account of the experience of the participants (Bryman, 2008). As described by Patton (2000), validity in qualitative research depends on a variety of factors, ranging from how information rich the selected cases are to the capability of qualitative researchers.

Being a native to the area of study, Gofa Zuria woreda, and being first accompanied by my father, who was a respected teacher in the area, enhanced the chance of trust and openness and that people would sense that I was not going to do them any harm. Rather, I encountered much praise and admiration for the fact that I wanted to understand their particular situation. As Toma (2000, as cited in Marshal and Rossman, 2006) argued ‘closeness to the people and phenomenon through intense interactions provide subjective understanding that can greatly increase the quality of qualitative data.’ Detailed descriptions from the researcher’s immersion and authentic experiences in the social world of the informants yield quality and validity to the study. In this field research, the involvement of the researcher helped to gather quality data from informants.

In order to avoid possible bias, triangulation was used in terms of methods, type and number of participants, and nature of the documents consulted. Triangulation has often been used as a way of treating validity in qualitative research (Brock-Utne, 1996; Patton, 2002). As described by Tellis (1997), case studies are designed to bring out details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data. On the other hand, Patton (2002) describes how one can attain triangulation in qualitative research by combining both interviews and observations, mixing different types of purposeful samples, or using competing theoretical perspectives. It is often said that studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors which could potentially lead to questioning of their findings, as opposed to studies that use multiple methods (Patton, 2002). The latter could provide information from multiple sources which could be used to cross-check validity. In this study, focus group and semi-structured interviews with multiple informants have been used to ensure validity through triangulation, and document analysis and personal observations have been used to corroborate the interview findings.

Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the replicability of the findings in another setting (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 1994) underlining the internal and external consistency of the study. Sometimes, the context-bound nature of qualitative research appears to challenge the applicability of the concept (Ibid; Brock-Utne, 1996). However, reliability in field research like this one depends on the researcher's insight, awareness, suspicions and questions (Neuman, 2000). Specifically, it has to do with the subjectivity and context of both the researcher and the interviewees. This hampers the full applicability of the concept, for instance the behaviour or response of the members would not be the same across contexts.

The other aspect of reliability regards the extent to which the findings can be generalized. It is not the intent of qualitative research to provide statistical generalization across the population, but rather to provide a unique interpretation of the phenomena and, as described by Yin (1994), to arrive at analytic generalization. However, as described by Freeman and Pankhurst (2003) and others, such as Dea (2007), the degree of interaction

between the two groups in this study and the situation of minorities in the country is presumably the same. Therefore, since the context is likely to be the same elsewhere in the region, there is a probability that the findings can be generalized.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

Dealing with sensitive topics presents a number of ethical issues for the researcher to resolve prior to commencing a study. Signed evidence of informed consent was not necessary in this study. The approval by the WEB and the KETB was sufficient. However, oral consent was essential, and participants were instructed on their right to withdraw or decline to answer a question prior to data collection. Some parents declined to participate in the study.

Anonymity was guaranteed and confidentiality adhered to particularly with respect to sensitive issues. While the real names of parents and children are not given, the education officials allowed me to use the title of their positions but not their real names.

The fact that I am from the area where the study was conducted meant that I had to take precautions to avoid possible biases. Particularly, even though I am not from the minority group, I have sympathy for them since I strongly support principles of fairness and equality of opportunity. I was accepted by the minority group due to the fact that I went there to study their problem of exclusion from the group to which I, myself, belong.

This could potentially have overtaken my role as a researcher and the ethics I am supposed to follow. However, I counter balanced this by using the same methodology and raising the same issues with both groups to understand the reality on the ground (Bryman, 2008). After finishing the data collection from the PTA, parents and children, the preliminary findings of the study was discussed with the woreda educational expert. I was then asked to provide all the findings to the woreda education bureau after the completion of the study. The results of the field work appear in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Exclusion of Children from Primary Education

This chapter analyses the reasons behind the exclusion of children from the minority and dominant groups from education in Gofa Zuria woreda based on the data collected through interviews and personal observations. It also examines the views of the government officials in light of the policy analysis considerations in Chapter 2 on the importance of UPE and the role of NGOs.

5.1 Factors Explaining Minority Group Children's Exclusion from Education

I have fourteen children and all have not been to school so far. Of course some of them are now too old to go to school but I don't have the capacity to send the others to school. [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010]

This is what one of the potter parents said during the discussion. He has fourteen children of whom six are at home whereas others are married and have established their own family. To understand the reasons for the difficulty expressed, the livelihood situation and the relationship of minorities with the dominant population are outlined below based on my personal observations and discussions.

5.1.1 Living Circumstances and Perceptions of Potters

The sole income generating means for occupational minorities is making and selling pots in the market. The whole family, including children, is engaged in the process of making

pots and baking jar. They have to make as many pots as possible to make enough money for a living. Virtually every day they are preoccupied with making pots. As one parent said in the discussion [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010]: ‘we spend all our time on making pots and the process of producing one pot takes time’. The time varies depending on the size of the pot, ranging from hours to five days. The low price of a pot and market volatility challenge their livelihood, even seasons in the year have a significant influence. For instance, during the summer when there is little sun and dry firewood, it is difficult for them to have enough income.

The price per pot depends on the size of the pot, ranging from one birr [~ 0.059 USD⁶] for the smallest to six birr [~ 0.35 USD] for the biggest pot. Only the parents are engaged in making the big pots, while children make small pots. Ingredients, such as clay soil, water and firewood, are crucial in the making. The parents mentioned that one thing they get for free is water, for their settlement has for centuries been confined to the river sides. The finished pots are sold in local markets. The market days differ from one site to another, but there are generally two or three market days per week, including one big market on Saturdays where buyers come from far away villages.

It was difficult to estimate the size of the population. No public information is available since the minorities are not distinguished from the rest of the population. However, according to kebele officials and the people themselves, out of 374 households in one of the kebele, 125 are minorities. Their exclusion from the vast majority of the population has made them develop their own culture, a culture which is still considered as impure by the majority. Not only is there cultural exclusion but they are also excluded from participation in the political sphere. According to the kebele official, people in power are not from the minority group and hence there has been no plan or incentive to remove the prevailing social stigma. In the PTAs, for example, where at least two parents are represented from communities, none was from the minorities.

⁶ 1USD= ~17 Ethiopian Currency (Birr).

It appeared that there is very little room for interaction between minorities and authorities, for there is nothing that brings them together. For instance, had the minorities been farmers, issues such as use of fertilizer, safety-net programme or any other political issue would have brought them together. Instead, the minorities live in complete isolation. During the discussion with PTAs, the kebele leader said that the minorities are different in every way from the rest of the population in that they violate food taboos, such as eating dead animals and insects, and have no self-respect and wisdom. They rarely own a house. Hence, he continued, as everyone in the group nodded their heads, ‘how can we think of bringing their children to school when they have so much to change?’ [FGIPTA-03/10/2010]

The discussion got heated when a question was raised about what universal primary education means in this area or as was written on the school gate ‘ጥራት፡ ያለው፡ ትምህርት፡ ለሁሉም!’ which means quality education for all. It was mentioned that door-to-door awareness creation for the farmers in the community was made regarding government plans as well as the importance of education for their children. Yet potter families had no information on what was going on in their own area. In the discussion with potter parents, they described that, due to the fact that they had been left as they are for decades, they could not do anything now. One of them continued:

....other people, i.e. farmers, did change for the better, they are sending their children to school because they are close to the ‘kawoo’ [‘kawoo’ in the local language means leader or government] and the government hears them. Everything is being done for them, but what do we have? Nothing! So here we are, for centuries. [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010]

The minorities do not own productive assets, land or cattle. Because they are considered as impure, they are not allowed to produce anything edible for the market. It is an established practice that they are not involved in farming or animal breeding. This has left them with only one economic activity, pottery production, which has to be done every day. One parent said:

You can see this [showing me how to make pots], this is how our grandparents used to make them, and nothing has changed. No difference at all. We are forgotten people, something worthless. There are so many ways to help us improve our way of life so that we do what you are saying to us [...educating our children...]. I cannot send my child to school as long as there are so many social problems here. [FGIMINPA- 18/09/2010]

The implication is that the income they generate is not enough to cover school fees and other opportunity costs, since it is just enough to cover the daily living costs. As parents pointed out:

All family members are involved in pottery production in order to maximize the income we get from the sales. The job is physically demanding and labour intensive. We need to buy a lot of food; we have to eat to get the strength and power to produce as many pots as possible. For that, we buy food and other necessities at a high price. We generate far less income than what we spend. After shopping, we often have no money to save. So we do not have money to send our children to school. [FGIMINPA- 25/09/2010]

This led to the question whether the parents would send their children to school if they receive financial help? According to one parent:

Our economic problems would not be alleviated by giving us financial help [...] because that would not be enough. We might not send our children to school even if we receive that. First, you have to look at our way of life. What do we have? We are not treated as humans here! We have no equal right with others. Second, what is the future of my child after graduating? As far as I know, I have not seen anyone from our group assuming government office or being hired by the government. [FGIMINPA- 25/09/2010]

The discussion with PTAs revealed, however, another argument about the economic situation of the potters because of, what was seen as, their extravagant behavior. As indicated during the discussion:

They make money and they spend all in one night, they do not consider that there is a tomorrow. It is they who always get drunk. Look at other people [farmers] they seldom do like that. Look at their [potters'] homes; we [farmers] do not even let our cattle live like that. They sleep on bush and grass. And the thing is, they

know they will get money again tomorrow, because they alone have that skill which no one else can take over. [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010]

Despite the above claim, parents involve their children in the production of pots partly to generate as much income as possible to make ends meet.

5.1.2. Child Labour

Our work requires extensive labour, starting from bringing inputs, such as clay soil, and firewood from far away, to taking products to the market. Our children are our backbone. They do the work with us so that we can make enough money every market day. [FGIMINPA- 18/09/2010]

I make pots by myself and take them to the market for sale. From the money, I buy clothes and give some money to my family. [FGIMINCHI- 23/09/2010]

The above was indicated by both potter parents and children. Children at an early age get used to how their parents make pots. As many pots as possible are needed for each market day to generate as much income as possible; the whole family, including children, take part. The nature of child labour is diverse. It includes collecting firewood from far away forests, bringing clay soil, and carrying the finished products to the market for sale. As one child stated:

My parents want me to acquire the skill of making pots; they told me that this is who I am. Of course that is what I see now. It is good also because I have money now. I can buy my own clothes and give some money to my family. [FGIMINCHI- 23/09/2010]

The rationale for parents to teach the skill of making pots to their children to some degree emanated from fear that if their children learn other things, e.g. through schooling, they would probably end up with nothing. Their fate is restricted to what has been passed on from generation to generation. Parents do not trust that the existing system would ensure

that their children get a job after completing a certain level of study. According to one woman in the group:

Their participation in the production process is not only to pass on our legacy [the skill we as parents received from own grandparents] but also to produce more pots. And what future do they have if they do not take this seriously at an early age. It is their future livelihood; they have to be good at it. [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010]

After mastering the skills, children start producing small pots at the age of seven, apart from collecting firewood and clay soil. In some way, they develop a sense of independence and at the age of fourteen or fifteen years, they get married within their own group. This is due to the endogamy rule which means that they can only marry from within their own group. Hence, children play an important role in generating income for the family while acquiring skills for their future livelihoods. Schooling has, therefore, never been part of their lives which raises the issue of the relevance of education.

5.1.3 Lack of Relevance

The parents and children seemed not to value education because they could not relate education to an improvement of their livelihood and/or work. In practice, they have no access to education. Even if they managed to get access, they would not get a public position or any other job in society. Only one person from a potter's group has become a teacher. As it turned out, despite his parents being potters, he was adopted at the age of eleven by two missionaries who were working in the area in 1967 E.C.⁷ They took him to Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, where he grew up and became a teacher and then returned to his home area to live. Had he stayed, he would also have ended up making pots for the rest of his life.

⁷ E.C refers to Ethiopian Calendar which is eight years behind the western calendar (G.C). Hence, 1967 E.C means 1975 G.C (Gregorian Calendar).

Describing the current situation, this very teacher pointed to the prevailing discrimination in the society where he lives and that he received little or no respect from the students he teaches. He continued:

There is almost no social acceptance; it even ruined my marriage a couple of times, for I married a girl from another community. Nothing has changed for the people on the ground. Schooling...how? Why? Where to go then? What importance does it have for a community like us? They say quality education for all, by that they mean for children who have the legacy of schooling, who have been in the course of schooling.** [02/10/2010]

The lack of relevance was reiterated during the group discussion with parents. As one man in the group said:

Look, I myself have never seen anyone from our community who has a job and was welcomed. Look, in this area not a single kebele militia is from our community. So given this fact on the ground, what is the guarantee that my child gets a job after finishing school? I think that would not happen. It is better for my children to keep making pots. [FGIMINPA-18/09/2010]

The PTA and KETB, whose main responsibility is to mobilize the whole community in awareness-raising, are not concerned with the potters. As one PTA member stated:

We do not think that we have to go and do extensive work in the potters' community. If they do not change their thinking and minds, and start behaving like us, then there is no point in telling them to send their children to school. They do not want change, so we leave them to the life they have always been living. [FGIPTA-03/10/2010]

At the same time, the government has explicitly stressed the rights of the people to participate in every way in the society. This would include the minorities. As indicated in the discussion with PTAs:

We do not have any rule restricting the minorities. The government has introduced democracy. No one insults them now like before. They are respected. Before, we explicitly insulted and demeaned them, but now they are equal with us. That is, I think, a big change. [FGIPTA-03/10/2010]

This was not, however, what the potters themselves felt.

5.1.4 ‘Forgotten People’

We are forgotten people that struggle to live our own way of life. No one cares about us. We do not even have a legal place to collect firewood and clay soil which are our main inputs for our job. We know how far our children have to walk to get them. No one allows us to dig the soil. Given this, education? Education is something a respected family would want, but we are not. [FGIMINPA- 18/09/2010]

Of course we see children from other groups [farmers] going to school and finally getting a job. It is unlikely that our children would be like that. We have not seen anyone from our people going to school and getting a job. So we better continue producing our pots. This has always been the case, what is new about it? [FGIMINPA- 25/09/2010]

These are ideas shared by the group. As it turned out, the offices responsible for ensuring that every child in the community, regardless of its group, gets into school did not have any information about minorities. In an interview with the woreda educational expert, profiles of the participating children from the communities under each kebele were presented. When it came to minorities, the official paused and said that he did not know anything about them. Parents from the group also revealed how they were neglected:

Take farmers or any other people in this area, they are now in a much better situation than before. Their life has been changing. They are sending their children to school and there is massive community awareness about the value of education. Lots of work has been done for them. Look at us, what we have. If you ask what has never changed in this area, it is us and black stone. A black stone would never change for centuries. Our life has never changed for centuries. [FGIMINPA- 25/09/2010]

During discussions with kebele officials, it appeared that a child born in a minority family would be independent at least, economically, at an earlier age, around the age of 10, compared to other communities. In that way, giving birth to more children would not

pose a threat to the normal life of that particular family. Nonetheless, these communities are ‘forgotten’ in the sense that, whatever the position of the community at large, it is the duty of the government to improve the livelihoods of the people. As potter parents stated:

How is the government helping us? It would have been better, had we been organized in some way and had modern tools to make pots. This would change our life, and we would change for the better. That way we would start living a more modern life. Everything we talked about [education, social life, participation] is interconnected. You cannot send your child to school while you are sleeping on grass or a bush. [FGIMINPA- 18/09/2010]

5.2 Factors Explaining Majority Group Children’s Exclusion from Education

While the living circumstances and lack of relevance of education seem to strongly determine the exclusion of minority group children’s from education, the dominant group also had children who were excluded from education. The factors explaining their exclusion are discussed next.

5.2.1 Living Circumstances of Farmers

In SNNPR, over 90 per cent of the main livelihood of the region’s population is farming and pastoral activities which are entirely based on rain-fed agricultural production. Contrary to national figure of 55 per cent, more than 75 per cent of the farmers in the region have less than one hectare of farm land (SNNPR Bureau of Finance and Economic Development, 2008). According to the report, only less than four per cent of the rural households rely exclusively on other income generating activities than farming. The main income sources are selling livestock and products, such as maize, teff [traditional Ethiopian grain], grasses and firewood. Sustaining life in households with a large family size requires far more than the current income (see also Chapter 4, section 4.4).

Last year [2009] I got 10 quintals (~ 1000 kg) from my farmland. I thought I would get money but it turned out that I could not even pay my fertilizer costs. It was really difficult for us to make a living out of this. As if this is not enough, there is the government policy forcing us to send all our children to school, covering their cost. How could I do that? All of us here have this problem, I think. [FGIDOMPA- 21/09/2010]

Issues of cost were what informants raised as the most important one to prevent them from sending their children to school. This seems to be because of the farmers' traditional way of life. As parents described, at the end of each season the production had been used for family consumption and the surplus had been sold to buy household necessities. One parent explained that feeding seven family members had been a challenge and he and his wife decided to send only the two older children to school. He continued:

We hear that education is important for children. It would have been good if all my children had gone to school, but I could not make it. I do not have the capacity to send all of my children at the same time. [FGIDOMPA- 21/09/2010]

This is what was repeatedly said by parents regarding their children's education. All confirmed that they send at least one child to school, leaving others at home. One PTA member stressed that the farmers know that education is good for their children, but the income they make from the farm land is too little to send all their children to school. He continued:

On average, there are 5-8 children in any household. Imagine then, it is in fact unthinkable to sustain life day-by-day, let alone having all children in school. [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010]

It has been a challenge for PTAs to carry out their role in the community. Both KETB and PTAs are accountable, amongst others, for bringing the children to school and preventing those already in school from dropping out. Parent representatives of the PTAs underlined that, while they do home-to-home awareness raising and follow up in the community, there is one question constantly posed by parents 'how come that we are

expected to send all our children to school?’ [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010] This appears to be related to the low income condition of parents coupled with the cost of schooling despite the policy of free primary education.

5.2.2 School Costs

It appears that the concept of free primary education seems to be interpreted differently at woreda and kebele levels. In the focus discussion with PTAs, a school director said:

Free education does not mean that parents are not expected to pay for their children’s schooling...[pause]...It means that the government pays salaries for teachers which parents would have been paying [contributing to], as was the case before. There is a school registration fee which used to maintain our schools. That is our duty. [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010]

He went on saying that parents are paying 25 birr [1.7 USD] per child for grades 1-4 and 50 birr [3 USD] for grades 5-8. In 2009, it was a very small amount of money, 10 birr and 25 birr respectively. This year [2010] everything was getting more expensive and they had to increase the amount. This might seem to be a very small figure, but for parents in the area, given the hardship of life, it is an overwhelmingly large amount of money. One parent said:

We are sending two of our children to school; we are doing this with so much stress. I have a small piece of farmland on which the whole family depends and it is not enough to make a living, let alone cover school fees for my children. That is why we decided to keep the other four children at home. If we have a good harvest this year, we will consider sending others next year but not all, just some. [FGIDOMPA- 21/09/2010]

A contentious issue was raised during the focus group discussion with the PTAs regarding how to interpret free primary education and decentralization when the responsibility for managing or maintaining primary schools is left to the community. The contribution is imposed on parents as a registration fee in an *ad hoc* manner. But the

school director in the PTA wondered where to get the money in order to keep the school running if they do not enforce the fees. In the focus group discussion with the PTA, the director of the school said:

We are not making parents pay only when there is a need to maintain schools, but we also desperately need their assistance to keep this school running, to buy stationery, such as chalk, blackboard, chairs and paper. The government left this to the community... [Everyone showed their agreement with the argument by nodding]. [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010]

The decision on the amount of fees is taken by the KETB and the PTA after scrutinizing the planned work and running costs and expenses of the school for a given fiscal year. A family with many school-aged children would be more affected than those with fewer children since the fee is often imposed on a per head basis. There is no exemption for poor families. As pointed out by the kebele official, if they were to make an exemption for the poorest, everyone would start complaining. Instead, as he said, everyone is equal in terms of paying the fees.

In an interview with the woreda educational expert, it appeared that the KETB is responsible for sanctioning fees in accordance with the communities' will or capacity and the proposed work. However, while a farmer with a relatively good income and few [two or three] children would feel that paying 25 birr would not be a burden, it would be a life and death decision for the poorest.

As appears in Table 5.1, more than 80 per cent of the farmers' children in the sample were school-aged. Almost half of them were not in school. To parents, school fees not only refer to registration fees but also to all other costs of schooling, such as textbooks, pens, pencils, shoes and clothes, and the opportunity cost of sending children to school is also important. During the focus group discussions with the PTA, the interviewees explained that during the home-to-home community mobilization to raise awareness and register school-aged children, parents either hid their children or confronted the officials.

Table 5.1: The Schooling Profile of Children from Sample Farmer Families

Family	Number of children			
	Total number in the family	School-aged ⁸	In school	Never been to school
1	6	4	2	2
2	6	5	3	2
3	3	3	2	1
4	5	4	2	2
5	5	6	3	1

According to one of the PTA members:

When we talk to parents about sending their children to school, the very question they pose to us is: ‘who is going to cover the cost?’ We cannot force the parents to send their children to school if they cannot afford to do it. What we are doing is to inculcate the importance of education, and that it is the government’s policy not to have a single child left behind. But, in fact, we are experiencing many children being left outside of the school gates. [FGIPTA- 03/10/2010]

The school director said during the discussion that this year [2010], 130 school-aged children were expected to be registered, but so far only 80 children showed up. He considered it to be unlikely that the remaining 40 per cent would show up in the remaining one week and rather feared that most would not come at all. As in the case of potters’ children, child labour was a determining factor.

5.2.3. Child labour

I have not been to school; neither have my brother and sister. I want to go, and when I see my neighbouring friends go to school, I feel sorry but there is nothing I can do. I have to help my family at home. I have to collect firewood and do household chores. [FGIDOMCHA- 01/10/2010]

⁸ A school-aged child refers to the age group between 5 and 14, according to the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2009).

This was stated by one of the farmers' children. They were all helping their family one way or another. Collecting firewood, fetching water, herding cattle, household chores, and working on the farmland were some of the activities in which they were involved. Most of them also did it as a way of making an income for themselves. Parents appeared to agree:

This is why I planned to have a child in the first place. In my case and for many of us, children are very important for our day-to-day sustenance. I have three children who do not go to school; they help the family with household chores and sometimes make money from selling firewood. [FGIDOMPA- 21/09/2010]

The general issue of out-of-school children was discussed with the educational officials in light of the existing policies and strategies for UPE in the country.

5.3 The Role of the Government

While it was clear that neither all farmers' children nor all potters' children went to school, woreda, regional and federal educational experts defended the current government's policies and strategies. The main achievement identified by all government officials is the big leap forward in terms of enrolment in the country. As stated by the woreda educational expert:

The main positive achievement we are proud of is the surge in enrolment and the diminishing gender gap. This is due to the priority given to expand access to primary education with special emphasis on rural and underserved areas, and on awareness raising campaigns. [INTWEX- 06/10/2010]

Describing the government's position with regard to providing universal primary education, the federal educational expert said that:

...providing quality education for all is the government's top priority. We have understood the importance of education for our population. So our policies are carefully designed to achieve that. That is why education is now integrated into

our Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). It is very instrumental for the country to move forward... [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

The educational experts at the federal and regional level also indicated the commitment of the government to continue the current progress as stipulated in the ESDP IV. As indicated by the federal educational expert:

With the ESDP, we are planning to overcome the challenges the education system faces in terms of quantity and quality. More emphasis would be given to children from disadvantaged regions or groups: the pastoralists, semi-pastoralists and indigenous groups, and children with special needs and vulnerabilities who are still out of school. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

Rural areas which had no schools before are now having primary schools under the government policy of focusing on underserved and remote areas which is a way of addressing the issue of equity to some extent. As described by the educational expert at federal level:

Due to the government commitment of providing equal opportunity for all in education, we now have schools even in the remotest parts of the country. There are boarding schools for pastoralists...and...we are trying to have at least one primary school in each rural kebele. We are devising ways to customize the education system to fit those who deserve.

5.3.1 The Challenges of Providing UPE

Despite the encouraging figures, there is also skepticism among officials with regard to ensuring that every child's right to education is respected. A number of problems have affected the current goal of providing quality primary education for all. As an educational expert at the federal level stated:

There are many challenges facing us. There are problems of access, equity, and providing quality education for all. The education system is in a state of distress. We have to provide education for all without any quantity/quality tradeoffs which is currently challenging the education system. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

However, educational experts at the different government levels have different views on whether the country is going to achieve UPE by 2015. In an interview at the regional level, all officials appeared to be confident that universal primary education would be achieved by 2015. But during informal conversations, they doubted the feasibility of the goal. As one official stated:

We will never achieve it by 2020, let alone 2015. Firstly, we use unreliable statistical data. You do not need to go to rural areas to see how poor the situation is, you can take a look in this regional state capital, Hawassa. There are many more out-of-school children than the official statistics. If you consider the case of rural areas, we do not know the exact number of those who are not in school. [INTREX- 14/10/2010] **

In a country where there are no reliable figures of school-aged children, it would be difficult to know the number of children who are left out of school and whether that number is decreasing. The Ministry of Education uses data collected by the CSA of the country from a population census undertaken every 10 years. It was reported that the estimate of school-aged children in the country is unreliable for at least three reasons. First, until 2007, the Ministry had been using data collected fifteen years ago to estimate the school-aged population both at the regional and national levels which meant that population estimates so far had been inaccurate (MoE, 2010). Second, the fact that the census is conducted only once in about 10 years would make the estimates vulnerable to significant errors. Third, the census generates estimates only for age-ranges, five years age group, and the varied demographic parameters and growth rates across regions and woredas distort the estimate (DFID, 2010). For example, some regions and woredas reported the number of school entrants of age 7 children larger than the census estimate of the total cohort (DFID, 2010) which highlights that the population of 7-year olds is significantly underestimated.

Nevertheless, an educational expert at the federal level claimed:

We are 100 per cent sure that we will achieve universal primary education by 2015, realizing the right to education of every child. The enrolment rate has almost doubled now and is moving at a remarkable rate. But I am saying this from a policy perspective. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

However at the woreda level, there was great skepticism:

From a political and policy perspective, we may say we will achieve it. That is what we have to say, and what we are mainly here for. We know, however, that we will never achieve it by any time soon, forget 2015. [INTWEX- 06/10/2010]

Some of the underlying factors for the contrasting views of the educational experts are discussed next.

5.3.2 Perspectives of Government Officials

Community Participation

Community participation is one of the ways the government plans to achieve UPE. According to the woreda educational expert:

Communities provide an important input for the continuation of primary education in the area. Particularly, it is parents who construct as well as maintain schools. Even in some places, they pay part of the salaries of teachers. Apart from that, we consider it as a way to increase enrolment, as more and more parents get involved, it creates ownership and increases awareness. [INTWEX- 06/10/2010]

Although it was considered to be crucial by the officials, parents described it as an obstacle to sending their children to school. There is no officially fixed amount for fees. In an interview, a regional official pointed to a rule which restricts kebele officials from enforcing ‘inappropriate and disproportional’ registration fees on parents [INTREX- 14/10/2010]. However, what is inappropriate is not specified, leaving wide room for arbitrarily imposing amounts on parents. As the KETB official admitted during the focus group interview with the PTA:

It is obvious that it creates a burden on parents, and also it may cause them not to send their children to school at all. But there is nothing we can do about it. It is the government policy. The woreda receives block grants so that the government can ensure that the school has minimum resources to carry out the teaching process. Sometimes this may just cover the teachers' salary. [FGDPTA-03/10/2010]

School Construction

It was indicated that the government has embarked on constructing new schools in different parts of the country and on training primary school teachers. In order to increase enrolment, the number of primary schools has increased in rural areas. In order to provide access to education for those children living in remote and pastoralist areas of the country, attempts are being made to provide boarding and mobile schools.

This 'over-emphasis', as described by one woreda expert, on constructing schools is, however, insufficient to reduce the current number of out-of-school children in the country. As he stated:

You know our policy has mainly concerned the construction of schools. Yes! That has led to a big improvement in enrolment but that seems obsolete now. We have primary schools everywhere, at least in this area, but we have not succeeded in preventing children from being out of school. Now we need another strategy to bring these children to school because they have other problems than physical access. [INTWEX- 06/10/2010]

This statement is supported by my own observations. As described by parents, the problem was not lack of physical access to education, but the social fabric in the area and economic downturns. The federal and regional educational experts pointed to political solutions which contradicted what woredas officials and communities described. In order to overcome the economic problems of farmers, for instance, it was reported that there had been agricultural extension and safety net programmes which were to boost the economy of the farmers' families. There is also a family planning programme nationally aiming at curbing the family size. According to the federal educational expert:

We are not saying that education is the only weapon to overcome all our problems. Of course there are movements in every sector, agriculture, health, etc...and we expect all the sectors to coordinate to solve the problem, but we fall short of satisfying all at once. We, as a government, try to do our best; woredas are also expected to do their best. That is the only way forward. [INTFEX-24/10/2010]

Coordination

It was indicated that co-ordination among PTA, KETB and the community at large has been considered as a way of solving local problems that arise from communities. The issue of out-of-school children is one of their focus areas. As indicated by the federal educational expert:

Woredas, KETB, PTA and the community need to work hand-in-hand to solve their own problems. For instance, we expect the community to deal with out-of-school children by raising money through collaboration. Issues like that are left to the community. Or the woreda needs to look for NGOs who will sponsor those out-of-school children in that area. We cannot go to the grass-roots level to examine every problem. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

At least in theory, it was promised that decentralization would hand over the responsibility to regions for the design of policies thereby solving local problems through local solutions and means. But what if certain groups are totally forgotten by the people with whom they live, as revealed in this study?

As stated by the woreda educational expert, when asked if the potters' case had ever been a point of discussion at the woreda level:

[...paused and not knowing what to say...] we do not treat them separately; we forgot them for that matter. I admit that they are extremely isolated from the education system. No other group has ever been disadvantaged more than they are. It requires extensive work and it is of course beyond our capacity to do that. We can do our best but it needs community mobilization, changing the societal mindset. [INTWEX- 06/10/2010]

The expert indicated that changing the mindset of both the larger community and those who are marginalized would require massive work. One of the officials mentioned his

own recent experience**. One day, he saw lots of people gathered around [his office] without any purpose, and suddenly he shouted: ‘why do you people gather here without any job like ‘fuga’’.⁹ The minorities are in fact neither considered as a marginalized group, nor are they considered as an underserved group in the society by educational experts at the federal level. The federal educational expert said:

Of course what we have to do and [we] are doing it right now is designing policies which are thought to bring equal opportunity to all children irrespective of their background. Our focus has been at the ethnic level which requires a nation-wide approach. Regions have the prime responsibility to execute any policies to solve the problems under their jurisdiction. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

While the federal structure leaves the responsibility to the woreda and region, experts at the regional level, in turn, pointed out that the region has been forgotten for many years, and that it has a range of problems which the regional government wants to prioritize, such as the pastoralists, communities in remote parts of the region as well as improving the level of awareness in the region. According to the regional educational expert:

These diverse problems often challenge the region, yet we have a very low budget. Do not forget that this region has been neglected by the previous governments. We have massive work to do and we know that we have a long way to go to overcome these problems, many years. [INTREX- 14/10/2010]

Whether NGOs are used to work in partnership on the issue appears in the following.

5.4 The Role of NGOs

As stipulated in the government documents, the government seeks active involvement of different stakeholders (civil society and NGOs) in order to extend the quality and relevance of primary education to all school-aged children (MoE, 2002). My interviews at the woreda level revealed that there is no NGO currently working in the woreda on

⁹ Fuga is a local demeaning name given to minorities. According to local authorities, it is forbidden to use this name in public nowadays.

addressing the right of the child to education. In the regional educational bureau, I was told that there are very few NGOs and that their number is decreasing. From the list of NGOs, both local and international, which are involved in providing stationaries to schools and children who are in need of financial assistance, it appears that NGOs are confined to children with special needs education. Furthermore, the majority is working in main cities and towns, rather than in rural areas. The government at local levels (e.g. regions or woredas) cannot force NGOs to work in a certain area or part of the region although NGOs are expected to work in line with the government priority areas and address the most pressing problems at hand.

From my interview with the federal educational expert, it appeared that it was the region's responsibility to find NGOs to support the ongoing effort towards universal primary education, thereby reducing the number of out-of-school children. The federal government only has the responsibility to prepare the ground for NGO involvement:

Of course we have priorities such as pastoralist areas and remote places. But we cannot force them [NGOs] to go there; all we can do is to let them know what our current agendas are. In the same token, it is the responsibility of regions and woredas to look for and convince local NGOs if there are any in their localities. [INTFEX- 24/10/2010]

The 2009 regional NGO profile report for the education sector stipulates the presence of 35 NGOs mainly focusing on constructing new schools, providing alternative basic education, supplying school equipment, and in the case of a few, focusing on gender equality (SNNPR, 2010). As pointed out during an informal conversation with an educational expert at the regional bureau, some NGOs worked on the rights of the child before the adoption of the new NGO proclamation in 2008, but they are now restricted due to it. As explained by one of the educational experts at the regional educational bureau:

It is our [the government's] belief that we can take care of the rights of our people. We are able to do that. What we say is, let NGOs take care of other business than issues we are capable of handling. What we did is to replace them.

We, as the government, can bring change in the collaboration with the community. [INTREX2- 17/10/2010]

This appears to include children's right to education. It shows that the current structure leaves the responsibility of realizing the children's rights to education to the community. As indicated by one of the educational experts at the regional bureau:

If you look at the decentralized educational policy, everything boils down to the community. We need the community to own the primary schools. So, that means everything, including that the so-called [...sounding sarcastically...] right to education should be left to the community. If there are poor families in a particular community, then they have to help each other to cover all costs. And the woredas have to look for support themselves. We have a culture of support, caring and sharing. [INTREX2- 17/10/2010]

The woreda educational expert confirmed that it is unlikely that this would happen any time soon since life in rural areas is not as simple as top government officials tend to think. He continued:

As woreda educational experts, we are the immediate responsible body for the community. We know what is going on in our localities. As far as I know, we could not get any NGO or any other organization to support us either in advocacy or in the overall effort to achieve the right to education. We have no movement with regard to that. [INTREX2- 17/10/2010]

In conclusion, children from both social groups were excluded from education, but the children in the minority group were completely cut off from education. The federal government mainly left the responsibility with the community that faced severe economic constraints in fulfilling government policies and seemed to be unwilling to handle the particular situation of the minority group. The same is true for the dominant group, since children from this group also did not escape exclusion. How the different actors and factors interacted as an exclusionary mechanism is explained in the following in light of the conceptual understanding and determinants of education identified in Chapter 3.

Chapter 6: Explaining Children's Exclusion from Education

This study has examined the challenges of UPE by analyzing out-of-school children from two social groups in southern Ethiopia. The three research questions focused on the reasons why children from the two groups are out-of-school and the role of the government and NGOs in addressing the issue. The study has shown how different actors and specific factors that are both particular to each group and common for both groups appear to exclude children from education.

To understand the reality, a theoretical framework was constructed, built on social exclusion theory and the rights-based approach. Kabeer's (2000) two forms of social exclusion, the economic and the cultural ones, were presented, highlighting that they can act independently or as a hybrid form to exclude particular social groups. The role of institutions in creating and sustaining exclusion was also noted. In addition, the rights-based approach elucidated how exclusion from education can be sustained if actors in the education system fail to execute their responsibility. The more specific determinants of education were highlighted both in general and specifically for Ethiopia, as indicated in Table 6.1.

The findings of the study are discussed in the following in light of the theoretical framework and the literature review on the determinants of education. It also analyses the formulated education policies and strategies in the context of the reality in the study area.

Table 6.1 Determinants of Education as per Literature Review in Chapter 3

Determinants of Education			
General Literature			Literature on Ethiopia
Supply-Side	Demand-Side	Other	
Parental Education	Availability of Schools	Conflict and Fragile Situation	<i>Perceptions of Education</i>
Literacy	<i>School Fees</i>	<i>Caste and Ethnicity</i>	<i>Cost of Education</i>
<i>Economic Status</i>	School Facilities		<i>Child Labour</i>
<i>Cost of Schooling</i>			
<i>Child Labour</i>			
Family Size			

Note: Determinants in italics refer to the factors that are also found in the study

6.1 Economic and Cultural Disadvantage

In the case of the occupational minorities, the causes for the children's exclusion from education appear to be related to both economic and cultural disadvantages of their parents.

The economic disadvantage of the parents is mainly manifested in the exclusion from main economic activities in the area. This can be seen in two ways: First, the group is denied owning productive assets, such as land which is the main livelihood household asset for engaging in farming. Second, the group is confined to a poorly paid and undesirable form of work which is considered to be impure. It was indicated by parents that their inability to afford to send their children to school is partly because of this economic disadvantage.

The economic disadvantage is not only limited to the low return on or the traditional way of production, but also to the lack of other labour market opportunities. This created no

hope for the parents to send their children to school, and underlined the lack of relevance of education to the group. Instead, all parents maximized on their children's skill of pot production from an early age. This led to the group's low standard of living, and reinforced a cycle of poverty and social immobility for generations. It also seemed to exacerbate the prevalence of child labour. Hence, economic disadvantage not only resulted in lower income in the family, but also paved the way for child labour which, again negatively impacted children's schooling.

As parents indicated, they lack both the recognition by and representation in the community at large and the local authority. This lack of recognition and representation is seen in the fact that the minority parents have not been included in the awareness-raising campaigns in their localities. It also appears from the fact that they are not represented in PTAs, KETB or any local positions. This is because of their cultural disadvantage which is related to the norms that affect both parents and children. As parents described, they are still considered as impure and devalued and disparaged by the dominant group. Therefore, they have seen no improvement in terms of productivity or in the way of production. This has led to complete isolation of the group, including from education. The combined economic and cultural forms of exclusion are so deeply rooted in the group that no single child has ever been to school, according to the parents and officials.

Unlike the case of minorities, the situations of parents from the dominant group appear to highlight poor economic conditions as the only factor for the exclusion of children from education. Farming is a recognized occupation which the government has supported in order to boost the productivity of individual farmers. The group has also been recognized by the authorities through the awareness-raising campaigns for education. However, due to the subsistence economy and frequent economic shocks, such as harvest failure, parents could not send all of their children to school.

From the list of determinants of education identified in Table 6.1, not all appears to apply in this study. However, some factors are specific to each group, while others are common to both.

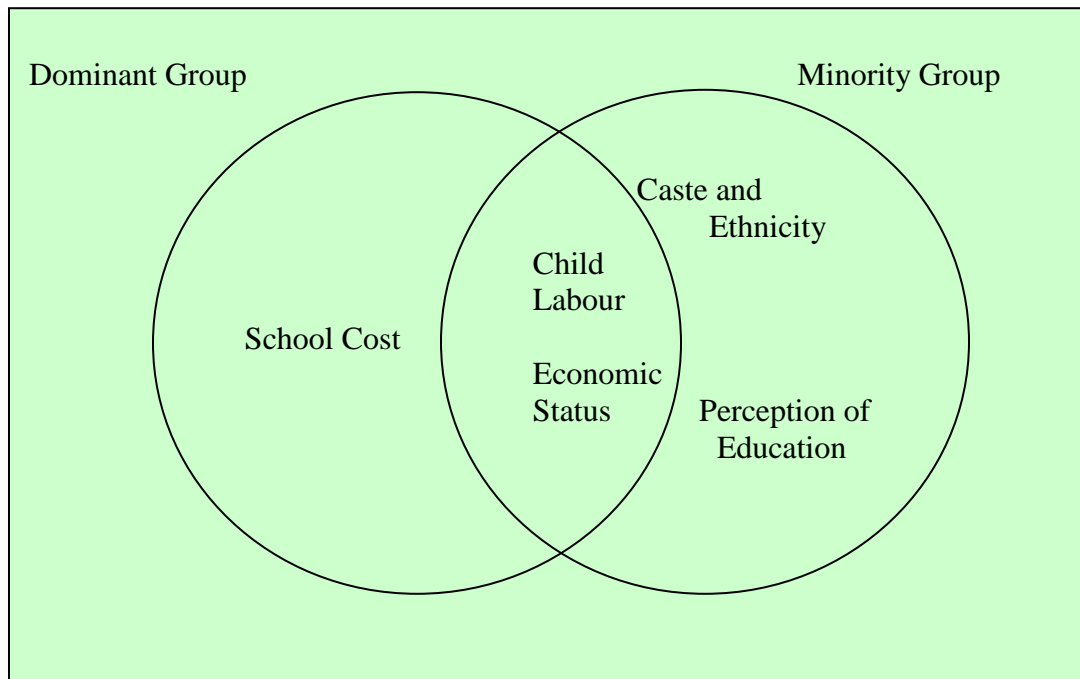


Figure 6.1 Determinants of Education for the Two Sampled Social Groups

Figure 6.1 shows that child labour and economic status appear to be common to both of the groups while school cost appears to cause children's exclusion from education for the dominant group. Caste and ethnicity, and perceptions or values of education are factors exclusive to the minority group.

Although child labour seems to be pertinent to both groups, the reasons for its existence differ. In the case of minorities, children are considered vital for the continuation of the family income. Hence, children generate income for the family. The very fact of the absence of any other future livelihood for the group confirms the inevitability of child labour, at least in the form of skill development at an early age. In contrast, children in the dominant group are not involved in generating income directly; rather they are helping their parents. Parents from the dominant group keep their children at home to work on the farmland and sustain the livelihood of the family. This is related to the main livelihood of the parents, namely farming which is a subsistence and labour intensive

activity requiring the involvement of the children in the farmland, as also mentioned by Jones et al. (2005), Poluha (2007) and Alemayehu (2007).

Similarly, even though economic disadvantage appears to be common to both groups, as expressed in low income or poverty, it is more pronounced for the minority group because of the hybrid form of exclusion they are facing. It also explains their different perceptions of education.

6.2 The Roles of Education

As indicated in Figure 6.1, the minority parent's perception of education is one of the factors explaining the exclusion of their children from education. This can be related to two findings in the study: first, the perception of the community regarding providing education to the minority group; and second, the minority parents' own perceptions of education.

Parents indicated that they had been in a state of neglect both by the people they live with and by the local government. The PTAs and KETB, who were responsible for the awareness-raising campaign in the area, and for ensuring that every child is in school, never considered this particular group. This underlines the value held by both the authorities and the community for the group and reflected a negative cultural perception. Equally important was the fact that the issue of education for the group had never been the concern at woreda level. In contrast, the majority group appeared to be aware of the importance of education, and follow-ups had been made to keep their children at school by the PTAs and the KETB.

This speaks against equality of opportunity. It is consistent with Haq (1992, as cited in Stash and Hannum, 2001: 358) who stated that educational systems mirror inherent value structures which may oppose equalization of opportunities. The minority group is dominated by the majority group in all institutional structures which categorically

exclude the minorities. Furthermore, the group's lack of recognition and participation in educational mobilization both at school/woreda/regional levels and in any governance structure seem to perpetuate their situation.

The perceptions of the parents regarding education are also important. The minority parents attached little or no value to education because of its lack of relevance. This appears to emanate not only from the economic disadvantage they have in the labour market, but also from the stigma against them which laid the onus for change on their own shoulders. Hence, parents see no relevance. On the other hand, parents from the dominant group have understood that some level of education can help them in their economic activities, such as fertilizer use, reading and calculating their revenue and profits, and communicating with agriculture extension workers.

6.3 Policy Controversies and Exclusion of Children from Education

6.3.1 Policy Implementation Gap

The issues raised by the informants from the two groups in this study show the mismatch between policy and implementation. It can be highlighted in two ways:

First, the policy of free primary education which is designed primarily to help poor households in schooling appears to have been unsuccessfully implemented through community participation which is part of the decentralization policy aiming at creating ownership and decision making at the local level. The responsibility for school maintenance and construction at the local level appears to limit parents' ability to ensure their children's education. Parents continue to pay school fees and other costs of schooling despite the stated policy of free primary education.

It also contradicts the education policy of the country which states that the prime rationale for making primary education ‘free’ is to let children from poor households attend schools, considering it as a way of ensuring equal opportunity. Although ‘arrangements’ were to be made to ensure that no child is excluded because of contributions (MoE, 2010b), this study shows such arrangements were never made, and parents who were not able to pay the school fees simply kept their children at home. This exemplifies the continuous adverse effect of school fees on poor households even after the introduction of free primary education, underlining the policy implementation gap, as also mentioned in other studies, such as Kadzamira and Rose (2003), Awaleh (2007), Omwami and Omwami (2009) and Schaffner (2004).

The second case of policy implementation gap is with regard to constructing schools as the main strategy to improve access. While constructing schools is the best supply-side policy in areas where there is no school, this study shows that emphasizing school construction as the one strategy to bring out-of-school children to school seems not to be an appropriate answer to all parents’ problems of ensuring schooling of their children.

This implies two things. First, decentralization was thought to bring efficiency and good governance because of the devolution of power to the lowest tiers of government, woredas and kebele, thereby solving local problems. From this study, it can be said that decentralization rather shows the decoupling of local problems from the perceived solutions. This, again, relates to the coordination among and between different levels of governance. Second, it highlights the need to introduce flexible policies to address the changing problems and challenges that are specific to certain group. Families from the dominant group seem to need incentives and encouragement which could be reflected in a policy shift from school construction to providing financial incentives which, as other studies (Arends-Kuenning and Amin (2004) and Awaleh (2007)) indicate, enables poor households to send their children to school.

This also appears from the rhetoric of the government. The education policy of the country stipulates the provision of compensatory financial schemes to poor and

disadvantaged groups. However, the block grants to regions and woreda do not include financial assistance schemes for the poor. Instead, the local government is expected to find NGOs to assist, which, in turn, is futile partly because of issues of capacity and coordination and partly because of the new proclamation limiting the presence of NGOs.

6.3.2 Local Capacity and Expectations

As appears in this study, no NGO is working in the area and it is unclear how the woreda is able to communicate with NGOs. The new proclamation is limiting the number of NGOs in the country in general and in the woreda in particular. This is the opposite of the education policy which states that NGOs, civil society organizations, donors and international organizations will be welcomed to undertake such activities as school feeding and financial and material support for children with vulnerability and other disadvantages. The gap left by the absence of NGOs is expected to be filled by cooperation within communities.

The government officials who are defending the new proclamation have high expectations that the community itself can take care of the problems and look after out-of-school children. Community participation in education is considered as a panacea by government officials for a range of problems. However, as indicated in the study, the fact on the ground is that parents have their own problems. Given their poor economic situation, it is unclear how this reliance on community 'self help plans' would work. Particularly, the existence of social groups with asymmetrical relationships seems to question the feasibility of the argument that communities would come together to solve the problems of children's exclusion from education, thereby ensuring the realization of the right to education. It also shows the government's tendency to consider the right to education as a moral rather than a legal right, meaning that the community together with NGOs is supposed to tackle the problem of exclusion, and work towards realizing every child's right to education.

In fact, the country signed international agreements, including the Human Rights Declaration of 1948, and its article 26 which stipulates education as a legal right (UN, 1948). This means that the government is responsible for ensuring the right to education of every child without preconditions. However, the right to education is not included in the constitution. Rather, it states that all policies aim to provide all Ethiopians with access to education, to the extent the country's resources permit. In order to avoid the exclusion of children from education, the right to education needs to be legalized and included in the constitution. Legal frameworks and institutional structures need to ensure that the government can be held accountable

In conclusion, the government seems not to be doing what it is supposed to do in order to address the issue of exclusion of children from education. The government education policies and strategies do not protect children from being excluded from education. The policies are both far from being implemented and what is being implemented differs from their original design. The causes for the exclusion of children from the minority group boil down to the two forms of social exclusion, economic and cultural. The dominant group appears to be affected by poor economic conditions which, coupled with school costs, exclude their children. For the minorities, the lack of relevance of education seems to have a significant influence on parents which appears to be the result of the combined form of disadvantage. For children to be in school, education needs to be considered as relevant not only by the parents but also by those who are in the position to raise the awareness of the value of education in the community. If education is perceived as being irrelevant, then the very purpose of educating a child is undermined.

6.4 Implications of the Findings

The myriad of problems facing the two social groups shows the persistent challenges facing the goal of UPE. It indicates the flexibility needed to tackle the challenges across social groups, underlining the importance of close cooperation and coordination among and between different government bodies and communities to solve the issue of exclusion

of children from education. Only then would the real issues of exclusion from education at grassroots levels be visible to the local and regional authorities, and solutions according to the local context be introduced.

The study has contributed scholarly knowledge particularly on the issue of minority children's exclusion from education. It has shown how economic and cultural disadvantages lead to the exclusion of children from the occupational minorities - an issue that has not been previously investigated. In addition it has highlighted the need for closer cooperation with the community to design policies and strategies that are responsive to local problems. It has underlined the importance that all actors in education fulfill their responsibility if the goal of UPE is to be realized.

In order to alleviate the issue of out-of-school children, the government could consider a number of measures both at the local and national level. First, the government could introduce reforms which favour minorities and alleviate the disadvantages that have persisted for centuries. Such reforms could include attention to both economic redistribution and cultural valuation of the minorities. Inclusive forms of education could be introduced through more integrated approaches. Second, as stated in the education policy, compensatory schemes for poor and disadvantaged groups need to be implemented.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1

Focus Group Discussion Guide with Parents from Dominant Group

Themes:

- ✓ Views on educating a child
 - ✓ Factors for not sending children to school
 - ✓ Criteria for deciding who should go and who should not
 - ✓ Child labour
 - ✓ What should be done
-
1. What is your view on education of your child? How many of your children are not going to school?
 2. Why (is) are your children not in school? What problems are you facing?
 3. Who are out-of-school children in your home? Why?
 4. How do you decide which (child) children to send to school and which to keep at home? What criteria do you use?
 5. How do you limit the number of children who are going and not?
 6. What do children do if they are not going to school? What do they do with their time?
 7. What help do you get from the government with regard to enrolling your children?
 8. What do you think should be done in order to send all your children to school?
 9. When are you planning to send your children to school?
 10. Do you think you can send all your children to school in one or two years' time?
On what does that depend?

Appendix 2

Themes:

- ✓ Views on educating a child
- ✓ Factors for not sending children to school
- ✓ Criteria for deciding who should go and who should not
- ✓ Child labour
- ✓ What should be done

Focus Group Discussion Guide with Parents from Minorities.

1. What is your view on education? How do you say about educating a child?
2. Why are your children not in school? What problems are you facing?
3. What do children do if they are not going to school? What do they do with their time?
4. Are you planning to send your children to school soon? On what does that depend?
5. What would have to change or be done for your children to be in school?
6. How do you describe other communities, such as farmers, in relation to yours in terms of participation in education?
7. How do you describe the role of government in mobilizing you to send your children to school? What about other areas such as health?
8. What help do you receive from the PTA for keeping your children at home? What do you say?

Appendix 3

Themes:

- ✓ Characteristics of out-of-school children
- ✓ Challenges and prospects
- ✓ The education profile of the social groups
- ✓ Plan of action

Focus Group Discussion Guide with PTA

1. Who are out-of-school children in this area?
2. What do you think are their problems? What can be done?
3. What are you doing to bring children to school? What are the challenges so far?
4. Who are the most excluded children from the school? Why?
5. How do you describe the participation of farmer and occupational minority children in school? Is there any particular explanation for it? What?
6. What is the problem of occupational minorities in the area? What about farmers?
7. How are you approaching the groups in your awareness-raising campaign in the community? What response do you get from the parents?
8. What perceptions exist in the community regarding the two groups? Why?
9. How do you explain the presence of out-of-school children in the area, in relation to UPE?

Appendix 4

Themes:

- ✓ Views and perceptions on education
- ✓ Reasons for being out-of-school
- ✓ Preference

Focus Group Discussion with Children

1. Why have not you been to school? Why did your parents decide to keep you at home? Do you agree with their decision?
2. What do you do with your time?
3. How do you think about schooling/ what does education mean to you?
4. When do you think your parents will send you to school? Why?
5. Which one do you value: helping your parents or going to school? Why?

Appendix 5

Interview guide for Woreda Educational Expert

1. What is the coverage of UPE in this woreda?
2. How far is the government committed to achieving UPE? What is the woreda's role in achieving UPE?
3. How do you describe the level of participation in education in rural areas?
4. What are the challenges for UPE in the woreda currently? And the prospects?
5. Who are out-of-school children in the woreda? Why?
6. What policies are targeted to reduce the number of out-of-school children? What problems are encountered so far? What are the prospects?
7. How do you see the extent of participation of children from occupational minorities and dominant groups? What explanation could be given for the difference, if any?
8. What policies exist regarding occupational minorities? What do you think their problems are? What about the dominant group?
9. What role does the government play in closing the gap? What about the role of NGOs?
10. What is the chance of achieving UPE by 2015?
11. Do you have anything you want to add to what we have discussed?

Appendix 6

Interview guide for Regional Education Expert

1. What is the coverage of UPE in the region?
2. How far is the regional government committed to achieving UPE? What role does it play in achieving UPE?
3. How do you describe the level of participation in primary education in the region? Where is participation relatively low? Why?
4. What challenges are you currently facing with respect to UPE in the region? What are the prospects?
5. Who are out-of-school children? Why?
6. What is the extent of the problems of out-of-school children and its implication for achieving UPE?
7. What policies have been targeted to reduce the number of out-of-school children? What problems are encountered so far? What are the prospects?
8. Are there particular groups who are excluded from the education system? What has been done to bring them to school? What about occupational minorities?
9. What policies exist regarding occupational minorities? What do you think their problems are? What about the dominant group?
10. Do NGOs participate in the region in terms of addressing the problems of UPE? How do they work or participate?
11. What is the chance of achieving UPE in the region by 2015?
12. Do you have anything you want to add to what we have discussed?

Appendix 7

Interview guide for Federal Education Expert

1. What is the current coverage of UPE in the country?
2. What are the challenges related to achieving UPE? What about the prospects?
3. What role does the government play in achieving UPE? What are the policies and strategies?
4. What is the general profile of out-of-school children in the country? Who are they? What problems do they face?
5. What policies are put in place to address the problems of out-of-school children? What is the challenge so far?
6. How do you see the problem of out-of-school children in relation to achieving UPE by 2015?
7. Are particular groups excluded from the education system? What has been done to bring them to school?
8. To what extent is the federal government aware of occupational minorities? What has been done for this group?
9. What is the level of participation in primary education in rural areas in the country? Where is participation relatively low? Why?
10. What is the coordination between different government levels, down to woredas and schools?
11. What role do NGOs have in UPE? What about in terms of addressing the problems of out-of-school children in the country?
13. What is the chance of achieving UPE in the country by 2015?
14. Do you have anything you want to add to what we have discussed so far?